

Theatre Australia

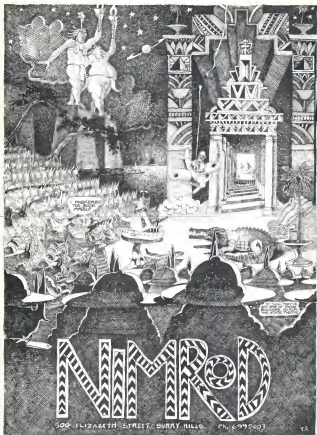
Richard Wherrett heads new
Sydney Theatre Company
Big business and the arts
Aus Ballet's *Coppelia*
G & S and the S A
State Opera



TRIBUTE
Starring
Bobby Limb



KIDS' THEATRE ISSUE



300 ELIZABETH STREET, DUNEDIN PH. 6995003

The national magazine of the performing arts

Theatre Australia



July 1979

Volume 3 No. 12

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COMMENT

GUEST EDITORIAL FROM BARRY DICKINS

Theatre Australia, what is it?

A mascot? A home race? A wurr-curr? A fox running through the suburbs? Ghed, and passed correctly, perhaps it could be the first scene opened but 'Yes, it's all of these things, and perhaps even further, it is a case of these things. There being a world-wide shortage of names even to be asked! And this is not only an indictment of the foot-traffic, but publishing in general. We received, by late mail not long ago, the spectacular information that we don't even exist. We exist, in fact, but sadly, not indeed. We exist, in fact as well as it is dead, but that even crippling and distant, Frisco, has happened onto us with its double hit. *The Remains Show* and the one actor, *The Total Embarrassment Show* and we were only just in fact, but not indeed.

We arrived, to our knowledge in all languages all over the world, even in Frisco. We are enjoyed, discussed, quoted, waited for in letters and telephone calls, we stand proudly beside these other great causes of social forces and creative garden parties, *Tag! News! Doublet! Quarterly! The Phantom! Words Of The World!* *Best! And Again* and the same and most level of all modernist monuments, *The War City*.

Indeed, we are popular, studies concern witty, poetic, and sociological. But something is decidedly wrong. What?

We cater to a definite need, that of popularising the stage, making known forthcoming plays, introducing unknowns known in Western Australia to one another, or even in Melbourne, that cultural upstart of mine.

Informers and pamphlet-dependent. *Oh! but I love that cry, remember that old standard song sung in the sun at photostrophic Deep Space Footprints.*

'Melbourne, City Of Light, City Of Footprints'. But I digress.

As one who has had the honour of being guard, cabbage, locked, quiet, bowed, brayed in, ignored, and good, elegant, polite, respected, enthusiastically reviewed and even shot on the stage I feel honoured to guest edit here particularly now, as theatres crisscross today beneath our feet, much like the sort of person who attack pointers for no reason with tiny stones of stone rock teeth as he picks up unknown concrete bits delivering bad news to all the laughing, tickling and red neck folk, he asks himself, always, 'Why is it like this in Australia?'

It is like this in Australia, because there are very few good pointers, and millions upon millions of stone rock teeth. A certain bad play recently bumped out at The Seymour Centre after being more dough than you could point a shovelful at, was promoted, published and printed almost beyond belief, but, as the truth of the play is in the bump-out it would seem that those in control of our lovely society, absolutely don't need the world millions of quids down the drain as long as it's not their down. And as far as that goes, not their quids.

Theatre Australia is also further locked in the past by Gordon and Gorch, those madcap

Continued on page 12



"In keeping with our sophisticated policy, I feel we must have a little of 'The Inmost Core!' — We'll just have to double up — that's all!"

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Editor:
Executive Editor:
Ed. Asst.
Artists:

Robert Page
Lauri Wagner
Arlene Rod
Henry Che

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Advertising

Manager and Circulation: Brad Ewing

602 Orchard Road, Chesham, NSW 2167

Telephone:
Melbourne
Sydney

Brad Ewing
(02) 411 3074

Editor: Melba Renshaw, Queensland
(07) 282 6798

Print: Patrick Conder (08) 344 2127

Circulation

1987: Editors (04) 67 4478
Tel: Raymond Stanley (04) 419 1204
Fax: Don Brachler (07) 288 3818
W.A.: Joan Anderson (08) 259 6839
S.A.: Michael Murray (08) 375 2204

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“? QUOTES & QUERIES ?”



Bobby Lamb as Scatman Tempestino in *Scatelo*
(Photo: Peter Hollander)

TRIBUTE

BOBBY LAMB — “Scatelo Tempestino”

“Scatelo” is an entrepreneur, a comedian who became a minor star of Hollywood and did not go to New York doing pilots. TV and on on. He is one of those guys who finds life a big one-liner put — all they’ hey? — you know. He’s lots of fun but the sort people lose their patience with. I mean one person who does it his wife, Maggie who loves him and then divorces him and remarries that she has had a son with him, a boy called Judd who is now about twenty-three and the son Judd is very disillusioned with his father. He’s fed up because, as he says, living with him is like playing the thought game as a comedy team all the time.

Anyhow Father finds out that he has something wrong with him and tries to get something with his son. It is both funny and sad and about the most touching thing I’ve read. It makes you laugh and cry and as you read through it. But mainly it is a light play, marvelous play.

Below I have a twenty-three year old daughter. I don’t find the part difficult. I’ve played comedy before that this is comedy and drama which I haven’t tried but I’m enjoying it. I’ve got a wonderful cast — Hans Groppe, Anne Simonne Johanne Nordstam and Tom Backlund from *The Roadster*. Young St. Davidson who plays my wife and of course Jackin Kato and great Lamb as Peter Williamson.

It is a beautiful play and a beautiful part.”

THE LAUGHING HEAD

JOHN FITTLE, Elkhart Theatre Trust

That little laughing head commercial for *Bedroom Farce* was a very expensive

commercial to make. Originally it was estimated to cost around \$10,000 — you must realize that it was done by one of the country’s top advertisers, but the attempts to control everyone that in fact they dropped the price in order to do it.

Jack, the agency that produced it, sent it to both Clio and the FACTS agency, and it has reached the finals of Clio. It is one of six Australian Commercials that have reached the finals — but this is the only one to reach the finals of the international section.

If you listen to the Oscars where you have Best Film, Best Actor, etc etc, then it is the same sort of system as Best Foreign Film would be. The international section is for any commercial made outside America and this is the only Australian commercial to reach the final of that section.

Most of the advertising people think awards only run second best to the actual getting done of a commercial, well that has done both. It has not only sold the show but also been considered successful.

Awards are probably at the end of the month so it would finish in a few weeks time if we get anywhere. We may not win it but we’ll be somewhere to have reached the final.”

WAOOLA, ARTS IN FERMENT

ADRIAN MINILL

The success for the Riverside Theatrical Company is recently appointed artistic director Bill Gordon Jamison, expires on July 1. Various sources report that as a result of meetings between the Theatrical Company Board and disgruntled salaried members of the Company, the master of musical of Gordon Jamison’s contract is currently an open question.

At time of writing the Theatrical Company expressly is deeply divided on areas of artistic policy, directional responsibility, pay role of its three salaried actors, on functioning of its Board. The Board includes members of Jane Davis, Brian Duggan, Kevin Roberts, Richard, Barbara Kaurer, Joseph Laidler, Eric Jackson, Ray Goodwin, Brian Sennett, administrative and Ben Laidler. Four of these Board members — Eric Davis, Mr Duggan, Mr Goodwin and Mr Laidler are co-opted members.

Duncan Jamison has now directed two plays at the Company’s 1979 season. *Love, Norman* (Sean Phipps) (Machin) and *Arthur* (Kevin Roberts) (Machin) plays that have been staged in spite of a disruptive climate within the Company, a climate which in my view has affected the unity of quality of these productions.

There is perhaps a larger conclusion at the

fact that what is enterprise generally in Wiggles is currently in a formative condition as if the legacy of comfortable socialism is suddenly being challenged by professional attitude. Recent events seem to (be) probably. The director of the City Art Gallery resigned dramatically amidst public speculation concerning the role of amateur and professional input to exhibitions. The local ALC Committee failed to attend the necessary minimum number of subscribers for its 1978 season. For instance, the local Museum Vireo Australia on 10, has found itself in difficulties, both financial and managerial. The School of Arts production of *Repentance* received a frank review in the *Wagga Daily Advertiser* prompting the *Wagga Daily Advertiser* to comment that that G & S double bill show was (be) reviewed. And the newspaper complied with the request.

Granted that the Theatrical Company’s difficulties are part of an artistic upheaval in the Riverina, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that personal considerations have affected balance of judgment and reasonable objectivity. Equally, much of the Company’s current malaise may spring from inadequate or merely verbal designation of duties for the salaried actors. Meanwhile, rehearsals are proceeding with *Don Quixote*, *Rob Roy* and *IV* and also with a new one not play by the Company’s writer in residence, Sandy MacLennan, titled *Strawberry Night at Glast*. Place is to be presented in a late night offering. And Wiggles wants to judge whether the business will produce good results — or merely excess of words.”

BERLINER ENSEMBLE STAR AT NIMROD

PAUL HERS, General Manager, Nimrod

“We are delighted to announce that Elkhart School will perform his recent of stage *Love* and *Power* by Brooks at Nimrod during our season of *The Life of Galileo* between 11th & 13th July.

School has been a member of the Berliner Ensemble for 17 years and has played *Amadeus* U. 548 and *Schubert* 10th times, becoming their deputy-director and general manager in 1977.

He comes to Australia with his wife Barbara, daughter of Berlin, and Wilfried Moppel, which makes Elkhart School Berlin’s son-in-law. This will be the fourth German company where the show has been performed — after the Poodle Theatre in Milan, Denmark and Bremen.

The programme will include songs from *Don Quixote*, *The Tempest*, *Amadeus*, the *Swamp Dance* from *Master Corcoran* and “Remembrance of *Amadeus*”, one of Wiggles’ most beautiful evenings. We shall be treated to music by Kurt Wolf, Hans Eiler, Paul Dumas and others, an evening of

great promise.

One special thanks in *KLM Royal Dutch Airlines*, for flying the company over the border wall.

SCHOOLS DAY

TONY WATTS, Associate Director, MTC.

"At MTC we've introduced a new idea this year in presenting plays for schools. Rather than the kids coming in just for a costume performance, we invite the schools in for a whole day. The morning session is a ninety minute informal demonstration of elements of particular interest in the production — the set design, lighting, rehearsal processes, the construction of costumes, props, set dressing, and so on. We talk of the staging rather than the text itself, to shift the emphasis towards the technical rather than the literary dimensions of the play. We want the kids to sit in on performances, not simply as dry tests to be studied and read in a class room.

The effect of the morning session has been significant. Instead of a bored disaffected "compulsory" audience, we have their attention broken by a room of appreciation when the performance ends.

The day finishes with a sixty minute questions session with actors, director, designer, production and workshop people, and we have had some highly provocative questions and comments on style and performance. They're a very bright audience given the chance, and hopefully we manage to convince at least some of them that live theatre is an exciting, unique and valuable experience."

THE TWO TIGERS

ANN FORENBERG, La Mama Theatre.

"The Two Tigers is currently a live affair. It's my way of approval of Mansfield as a writer, his of Mansfield as a critic. I decided to avoid hopelessly exotic comparisons, and on under-standing, and so the same time show something of Katherine's reality and irony.

The picture of Katherine Mansfield in the play is almost her whole life, whereas Murray's role shows only a brief portion in a much longer and varied life time — for Murray, Katherine was simply the first of four sons. Katherine's closest relationships outside Murray and her brother Christine, was his father, who makes only a vague appearance in the play.

Katherine and Murray were certainly a beautiful couple although not everyone continued to think so. D H Lawrence, under the guise of fiction, cruelly betrayed them in several of his works, notably in *Querencia* Brangwen and Gerald Crake in *Women in Love*.

The couple were both staunchly selfish people and it is our occupation of the selfishness that gives their relationship — and the play — its depth and quality. Murray looked a bit of spontaneity that might have helped to get them back together. Never were they able to just let in

each other's company, the only real way they could relate was through letters and Murray felt that it was passionately only when they were apart that they were together.

After the outbreak of WWI Mansfield lost her beloved brother — an event from which she never really recovered — and then contracted tuberculosis, the great romantic disease of the day. Aware of her sickness, Katherine was needed someone she could rely on, someone stronger than herself, and of course, Murray was unable to supply that strength in her last years she turned to the Russian mystic George Gurdjieff and is referred to *Fortress* and, and there she died.

The narrative, dramatised love affair of thirteen years had come to its end."

SCREEN ACTING SEMINARS

BRIAN MUIR, Director.

"These seminars go back to the operations in Queensland. I was an agent up there for about eight years and I found that my clients up there had little opportunity to be in the films that were being made. What happened was that the film directors brought in their own people from through the film was being made in Queensland — that was for the good reason that the directors wanted people with experience — for reasons of economy in the long run. I found that my clients had no actual film experience and therefore no jobs, no obviously some type of school was needed.

But I couldn't find up there the people with the sort of ability and knowledge that I thought was needed for the standard required, so I looked around for the very best teachers or actors who could be trained — and that's how we came to use Charles Tingwell. Ron Lasterick from Melbourne, Wayne Gordon, Terry McDermott, Terry Donivan (Mark Fitton at Division 4) and now Bob Haber.

We were based into the seminar form as we found people were available for only brief periods, but we found in fact that the six course seminar programme was tremendously rewarding for reaction and comprehension, and people were coming out of it more equipped than from the same long hours spread over six, twenty weeks. You see everything, remember everything else, and they all remember each other, and the results are simply fantastic.

Well, after eighteen months in Brisbane we looked elsewhere and found that no one was doing this, so we brought it to Sydney — not because their money's not up schools, there are — but we saw among at the film places and the small screen and the general public two work is through everyone is a beginner. We had a very successful seminar with Charles Tingwell a month ago — terrific — four people are now doing this next one too. You see after forty hours of this type of training people know whether they can rise the discipline needed to be an actor, as we're also picking up talented people

who just want to have a go, and they will know after the work whether they are in it or not.

FAST 1979

BARBARA ALLEN

"Festival of Australian Student Theatre (FAST) is in the process of being organised at the University of Queensland. FAST will be held from the 28th August to 2nd September.

Closely to campus there are four theatres, an auditorium, and other rehearsal and workshop space, which will be available for FAST activities.

Productions from drama groups of all tertiary institutions in Australia are invited to perform. A programme of wide ranging workshops will be conducted by well-experienced, professional actors. The workshops will cover as many aspects of theatre as possible, including script, mental theatre, direct theatre, writing and special effects.

The overall aim of FAST this year is to help students in a better, more rounded understanding of theatre.

It is hoped that working with others who are interested in theatre will provide an interesting and useful experience."

For details, registration and accommodation, contact: Anne Phipps, FAST Co-ordinator, University of Queensland St. Lucia, Qld 4067. Phone 370 1811.

QTC FLYING HIGH

LLOYD WHEATON, Education Officer, Queensland Theatre Company.

Why? QTC's *A Flying High* with the Queensland Theatre Company will tour in part of this year's secondary schools tour, sponsored by the Queensland Arts Council, some as the result of our wanting to include something that was preferably Queensland in the tour.

After I'd done some early research into the history of aviation in Queensland, I felt we had the material for the kind of play that we wanted. So Douglas Ridge, an experienced actor as well as writer, was commissioned to write for us.

Basically we're presenting a documentary review that looks fifty years of service by QANTAS. When you consider that, ten years ago, school students could watch man landing on the moon, I think it's important that we help them realise that all of that has developed from such small beginnings in so short a time.

It's also very much a story about the people involved in early aviation in Queensland, many of whom have descendants living in areas where we will be playing.

This is itself has led to a lot of pre production involvement in the play. We've had lots of letters, newspaper clippings and photographs sent to us by people who've heard that it's in

Continued on page 23

Ray Stanley's

WHISPERS RUMOURS & FACTS

Might a group of Australian playwrights, via the Australia Council, could follow the example of five Canadian dramatists who have been visiting art centres around Britain as part of a pilot project to promote Canadian playwrights abroad? The five were selected, apparently, to reflect the different regional perspectives into stylized approaches central to the stage in Canadian theatre during the past ten years. Through personal discussion and selective readings, they have been discussing the diversity of work being done in that country today.

With all those scripping offers Gordon Chase is receiving enquiries, are wonders if he will ever return to Australia permanently. When, before he left these shores, I suggested this might happen, he told me cynically he would always live and work principally in this country, but of course situations can change. Meanwhile, there is a whisper for a long while to replace Frank Thring when *The Laughing Man* returns in late next year.

Some interesting names due to appear with the State Company of South Australia have Russell & Oh, What A Lovely War, Mike Peter Carroll in *Malcolm* and probably Ian Ramsay as *Quilley* in *The Milkmaid*. Following her Lynda Langstaff in *The Beach*, Sandy Gore is about then happy she'll be working again with Frank Haines. His next playing *Del Connon* in *The Abolition*. Wondering if John Deutch will be cast in much-tried *Evans* when it is staged here.

Carol Brown, whose land not to return to work in her homeland. That respect film, *Romance in the Jungle* Five which she and husband Vernon Price went to film in, is up off. Linda Avenon is working on a new play with Frances Kennedy in mind for leading role. Frances incidentally is to read another moving, novel on the ABC. Indeed, Wright's autobiography, *Generations of Men*, after its recent Playbox production of *Notes From An Old Man's Diary* from a Lichon short story. Scott Ramsey tells me he is now turning his attention to some of Burgess's tales.

If everything goes according to plan, in November Melbourne will see two *Hamlets*. Derek Jacobi in the Old Vic since Prospect Theatre production presented by Clifford Hosking and the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust and John Walton in John Sumner's production for the Melbourne Theatre

Company. Looks as if Terry Howarth Jones is going away today for a couple of years. He will be a lion at Chelsea University working for his BA. Those seasons for people interested in film and television work, which Charles Tangwin is constantly involving, seem to be creating much interest. Certainly few people could be more qualified than "Bud" after all his overseas experience.

An I.P. is being made of Janet Bain's stage show *Chatterbox* through with Laurence Olivier as narrator and James Hayward and Dorey Sprafkin among the support. Bert is trying to persuade Sylvester Stallone to sing the role of the Giant in the sound. Loren Paster is taken over the lead role from Tom Chatterbox in the London production of *Chatterbox*. Before books were put out to Equity to support Ronald Lewis to play with the MTC. Ronald What?

It may be 80 years before the 20th anniversary of the first play to be staged in Australia. *Paraphrase* *The Australian Official* has already five received a telephone call with the suggestion there should be Australia wide celebration of the day in 1999. Maybe someone should even start the ball rolling now. Maggie Miller was certainly a busy girl during June, first there was *Run Run Away* at La Mian's instigated by Robert Knicker, and at the end of the month she went into Hooper's *Man After*. MTC Associate Director Bruce Miles leaves on November 11 (seven years to the day he returned to Australia for a 16-week trip taking in theatre throughout Europe and the UK).

Following a personal appearance on stage at the St. Kilda Palace, where her latest project *Antea* opened the Melbourne Film Festival. Wendy Hughes told me she would love to appear in a play at the theatre. Apparently it was the first time she had ever been inside the building and was most impressed. Barry Pincus, as a PDW officer in *The Ballroom*, is between filming takes pretending to be in a hot nearby Singapore, has been slipping back and forth to Tasmania where he's directing a film about documentary *The State Emergency* for the Tasmanian Film Corporation.

Here that in New York there's a surprise again calling herself Paula Green and in Hollywood two stoppers are needed. Barbara Bedford and Paula Newman. "There's 1932, he was after death — we just won't be able to feel it" says Lily Tomlin.

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Dear Sir,

I began by declaring a handicap. I'm a good writer who worked at the Mail in the Wall on David Allen's *Come With Me* — the play your Perth critic apparently got a lot funnier with in Canberra. One wonders why he bothers with criticism.

I declare my handicap because the Perth production had twice FA in the way of director, publicity angle, or back up, but it was still a valid and strong production, held together by Jerry McMan's dedication and Denise Enders's humor and fine piano work. The cast was great.

That the director didn't care much for the play, and was looking forward to working on the "contemporary" City Jager that the theatre manager was more concerned about, but your's left than coming up with a good publicity angle, is beside the point once the play's up.

After the first week, I checked with the director and manager, claiming that they didn't care about the production, and as for coming's theater they'd be flat out running a suit dress stand at the beach on a summer's day. The director saw the play once, apart from opening and closing nights. Mr Newby even less. The cast wanted to talk for box office failure, despite Mr O'Brien's attempt to attract Maxine MacCalland Pootley.

To the production. According to O'Brien, the most source of worry, by far, was my performence out of line. A "pandering, nervous and distracted performance" where we broke the royal phant the audience never felt sympathy for Mr Price at all. First Stan didn't want your sympathy and the way it played him to be detached. Heiner's another play, namely, life O'Brien. I deliberately kept back on Stan, because I was dead against the interpretation that would have him as a ruthless, unscrupulous self-seeker, who used his pique to distance people. He was a genuine innocent, whose great love in life was working on comedy page in a gay magazine. He is without peer, and as such was a kind observer of his fellow kind. A realist, as opposed to monster. Read Dash Van Dyke's note about Stan — that's where I was at.

As to Kane, I had Stan really not knowing how to handle her, not wanting to feel her, but realizing she was regarding his life. Later, in despair, he let her see her up. Stan was a thorough pro, back into the business — a Lancaster production who, at the time of the play, was searching for his clients. Perhaps the play does his reputation as judged by keeping on the shelves of locally he had as his attraction to, or — out front women.

As yours is the only national review of the play, good, and a sense of knowing where I've done a good job, excepts me to quote two other

reviews. "Michael Price, although locally dismembered in Laurel, had the lady's quiet's maintenance, and Lancaster's account to perfection and, even as he demanded his support system on his way up, he still maintained his air of casual support". Mandy Amon. *The Star* online. Dick Marsh.

"Michael Price in Stan gives a splendid performance, and at times he loses an exquisite comeliness to the comedian". Barry Robertson. *Sunday Times*. Dick Marsh.

Basically, the Perth production of Heiner was a strong job, the director and theatre manager alike, they didn't have their act together at all, and damned if O'Brien's goal was carry that on. As for Mr O'Brien's comments. let him look for himself and not for isolation as a whole, he'd be on his own as he looks of the rest."

Yours sincerely,
Michael Price
Perth, WA

Dear Sir,

In the May issue of *Theatre Australia* there is a review by Anthony Sawley of the Actors review by Anthony Sawley of the Actors Company production of *Griffiths*. The headline reads **BETTER THAN LAST YEAR'S TRAVEL**. Your critic observes that the company did a disservice to the audience with its 1978 production, and that at least this year's production is "better". He then goes on to demolish the current production. The obvious inference is that last year's *Griffiths* must have been an totally crap.

I devised the 1978 *Griffiths* which was not reviewed by your magazine. I have no connection with this year's effort. I have no interest in commenting on Mr Sawley's rather badly written review but I make object to his use of my "invention" of last year which also managed to parrot these critical comments.

That honest and competent production should create a profitable season. It was pleasing to see so many newspapers in the audience — and they were obviously enjoying the play" — *Edinburgh Magazine*.

"There are large clubs of maintenance and power. That Griffiths comes up with the sort of magic that was missing from the Old Tote's Prosper" — *Nation Review*.

"An unusual and stimulating production. The performance has its and open, is spoken clearly and keeps a good grip on the wrong event" — *Sunday Morning Herald*.

Travesty — a collection of dramatic parody about criticism — Penguin English Dictionary.

Yours sincerely
Michael O'Brien
Perth, WA

Dear Sir,

Could you please bring it to the notice of your WA critic that Gerald Hitchcock and Glen Hitchcock are not one and the same person. Twice in recent times (most recently in 7th April 1981), my brother Glen has been commended for performances given by me. Although this delights Glen — he has decided to subscribe to your magazine — it is somewhat galling for me, especially since the only time a performance of mine has attracted a bad notice, the wretched critic had the ill grace to call me by my own name.

Although a minor first Glen and I look alike, sound alike, and are both almost unanimously admired, let notice be served that ongoing presence a threatening source not of advantage.

Yours sincerely,
Gerald Hitchcock,
West Perth, WA

Dear Sir,

Heiner's production of *Miss Julie* was mentioned in the last issue as having been written by Anton Sanderberg. Actually Anton Sanderberg is well known as the author of the classic, *Dark Julie*. Miss Julie however was written by July Sanderberg. Improved in June.

Yours sincerely,
Cassidy-Gustaver and Roger Fobers,
Perth, Melbourne.

Dear Sir,

I rarely answer any written criticism about my reviews in the pages of *Theatre Australia* believing that a person is fully entitled to their opinion of my opinion and that someone who gives criticism should also take it, but the cockeyed, way-off the mark qualifications of Mr Lister, Applications WA prompt me to make a reply.

What was immediately noted in his little diatribe against me is that he discusses my review of the *Australian Ballet's Sparrows* purely in terms of political viewpoint, there is little anywhere any reference to the ballet. Sparrows is such a vast ballet piece.

I would like to know whether he has ever seen any production of Sparrows in any form, let alone the Aussie Ballet version as performed by the Australian Ballet.

I also doubt very much whether he had the chance to talk to Mr Sauer about the ballet and his version as politics.

If he had met Mr Sauer he would probably have thought the man very old fashioned and unimpressed compared to all those clever, stylish and smart, smart TV and radio people he had on his pet to Hungary last year.

Let Mr Lister never forget that Sparrows was

Continued on page 44

Richard Wherrett

Interviewed by
Rex Cramphorn

I spoke to Richard over lunch. He sounds and his questions seem mainly about his plans for the new state theatre company — the importance of respect was obvious and the style informal. I have arranged the material from my notes and cast it in the third person. The result reads a style like a press release or policy statement but I want to point to cover all the ideas Richard wanted included and the aim of the interview was, after all, to elicit these ideas and present them as straightforwardly and clearly as possible.

Richard's appointment as director of the new Sydney Theatre Company was something of a surprise to him. We agreed that among the Australians we knew who had applied, John Dill had wonned the Marston nomination. Now, unexpectedly, Richard wonders that he should have seen himself as quite so dark a horse. He will be taking up his appointment just ten years after his return to Australia and, although he applied for the position along with the other Marston director to study a listing that Australian directors ought to apply those it would be possible to complain about the acceptance of an application from overseas if no Australian had applied, he realises now that he would be taking the job very much and that it confirms the progress of his work in the last ten years.

Richard's work has been mainly with Marston. He has been with the theatre from its inception and, for the last six years he has been on full time salary. The period has been good for him and good for Marston. However, he feels that both he and Marston will benefit from the change — he will be in a necessary "turning-over", a transition. He is aware that one of his first duties as the Sydney Theatre Company is the establishment of a policy that will be demonstrably different from Marston's and he feels that this will benefit both companies by making them define their roles — while the Old Tote was not doing so job effectively Marston was forced to take over some of its functions. Besides, he sees the Sydney Theatre Company as having a responsibility in the area of classic and established Australian writing that plays like *Hamlet* and *On Your Going Home* might well have done better in the context of the state theatre company than at Marston while Marston has a rather more adventurous trend in the area of new Australian and overseas writing.

Richard speculates that there will be



Richard Wherrett

directors, more too many at Marston and that John Dill and Ken Horne will be able to divide the work between them well, perhaps, occasional post-dinner productions.

As part of his policy of making the Sydney Theatre Company a leading element in a national community rather than merely competitive for audiences, Richard proposes to have a number of Marston's board, as well as members of, say, Q&A and Marston Street's boards on the board of the Sydney Theatre Company.

Richard has been appointed director, but, as a director, he points out, anything that the role is seen as all-encompassing and not confined to "artistic" decisions of a board company of independent artists that it is to say it is not a government or public service organisation and he feels that his appointment by the various board reflects a desire on the part of the board and, indirectly, of the Premier, to implement the recommendations of the recent public meeting held to discuss the public opinion on the nature of the company to be set up to replace the Old Tote.

What Richard leaves Marston officially at the end of the season of *The Sea* his first three objectives will be the staffing of the company (beginning with an administrator and production

manager), the selection of a season of plays and the preparation of his first production. He plans to open at the beginning of 1988. He points out that his first production for the Sydney Theatre Company will also be the first play of the 80's in the Sydney Theatre as the Opera House.

Richard feels that the success of the new company will depend largely on his selection of plays, his presentation of them, and on his choice of personnel including guest directors. He expects to plan a six play tour with the possibility of using the Opera Theatre for one more production while the Drama Theatre is not available. Touring and transferring would also be possible at such times.

Richard proposes to maintain a permanent company of ten to twelve actors on minimum one year contracts. He also hopes to maintain a separate system with successful productions being retained — particularly in the area of Australian plays. He feels that many plays which have had one production in the last ten years now deserve consideration and, perhaps, a continuing existence via repertory.

Richard's aim is to make the Sydney Theatre Company a major company in the way that the RSC and the National are major English

Glynn — The Man behind the G & S tour

Raymond Stanley

As the seventies edge into the eighth, one man that we shall probably be hearing more and more of in theatrical circles here is that of Englishman Derek Glynn.

Already several of the successful tours of English actors we have seen in the past few years have originally been set up by Glynn. These have included the National Theatre's production of *The Front Page*, Harold Pinter's last tour, and Ronnie Corbett's *Apocalypse* debut in his own one man show.

Glynn is not just another Producer with behind experience jumping onto the Aussie show bus bandwagon in order to make a quick buck. He actually has years of theatrical experience and knows how behind him. Connected with Bernard Miles, Bernard Thomas (who since he first started to function in Sir Lewis's back garden in 1951, he has been a member of its management committee since the theatre opened in Piccadilly Dock in 1959).

In 1961 Glynn formed his first overseas company — The London Company (International of Plays) Limited — specially to present English actors in North America. He was the first presentation of a British production at the O'Keefe Centre for Performing Arts in Toronto — *Proseur Island* (adapted from the *Merchant of Venice*). The following year saw his co-production at the O'Keefe of *The School for Scandal* with Ralph Richardson and John Gielgud. Since then he has almost annually staged British stagings at the O'Keefe.

In May 1977 just before embarking on the Australian tour, Glynn presented the



Derek Glynn

North American premiere of the musical *Cold Feet* in the national tour of the USA, he is mounting that year.

For a time Glynn was J.C. Williamson Theatre representative in London, working then under Michael Holroyd. Now Glynn will be associated with all the attractions Glynn sends to Australia.

The first one of course is the first co-tour of Australia and New Zealand of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, which opened in Canberra in May and continues in Perth September 4, playing as well as seven other cities. Three weeks are being staged: *The Mikado*, *MHS Raffles* and *Iolanthe*.

Glynn together with his wife Kate spent three months in Australia and New Zealand at the end of last year, visiting every venue in which the 44 strong D'Oyly Carte Company will

play taking stage measurements, seeing set pictures and arranging for costumes, leaving nothing to chance, but calculating everything every single step of the way. It is probably the first time anyone from England has come out in advance and done such a thing. Glynn is full of anecdotes and interesting information about the country which he picked up on his exploratory trip.

As they did with Marlene Glynn and his wife are accompanying the D'Oyly Carte on its tour. During this period he hopes to set up production of the highly acclaimed English play about resistance *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* which will be produced with Michael Edgley in London but had was when by Tom Coss of TV's *The Gathering Storm*. Glynn, however, is convinced he will be able to cast it in Australia and probably make a play out of the actor playing the Coss role.

Although he looks like production men, an overseas name to give it a boost, as that person often cannot be said here. Glynn hopes to cast some of his future productions in the country and a lot of praise for the talent in his own.

Also, Glynn would very much like to find a good Australian play to present in England. One he wishes to had the English rights to is *John Fowles: The Language of the Earthworm*. He is also a great admirer of *King Lear* (1977).

Among his other activities, Glynn is the Consultant to Derek Glynn Associates, an agency formed for the management of an advertising of actors, writers and composers. He was also part author and co-producer of a new TV series for the BBC television in release in 1977 when the BBC released 20 one hour episodes of the series *Rev*.

Richard Wherrett continued.

companies of the text that "waxes eloquent and is enjoyed by" the hope that it will not be the use of salaries which will attract actors — he would prefer to see more widely applied to saving the general level of actors salaries — and believes that if the Sydney Theatre Company continues to get a major share of its body money is for the purpose of mounting expensive productions rather than for the purpose of paying disproportionately large size salaries.

Perhaps the only brief that Richard has been given at the expense and that the Sydney Theatre Company must continue to use the Drama Theatre as its "home". Prospects director Toby Robertson reported in the press to board that the question of venue was critical to the formation of the new company and that the limitations imposed on repertoire and acting style by the Drama Theatre were too great. Nevertheless, productions have been presented there, the first *Threepenny Opera*, *Measuring Remains*, *Menon*, *Seneca in Seneca's Lines*, *Capote* and *Chapel*.

Richard and then with careful selection of plays and productions there is no reason why these successful contact continue. Richard hopes that, as major user of the Drama Theatre, the Sydney Theatre Company will have some influence on the policies of the Opera House Trust, and that the experience of going into the Opera House for a performance can be made as pleasant and stimulating as looking at the building from the outside undoubtedly is. In one crucial area the backstage operation of the Drama Theatre, Richard is set to do battle on the question of making the staff members of the Sydney Theatre Company and not employees of the Opera House Trust. This will probably not be easy.

Revolving with the question of the use of the Drama Theatre is the need for an alternative venue for the company. The current administration has been looking for an administrative centre (The O'Rourke Street building used by the Old Tote and the current administration will not be retained). The most likely space point in use and located in a large area over the Overseas Terminal at Circular

Quay has the Maritime Services Board has not, so far, been persuaded to relinquish a Richard hopes that the alternative venue will fill a long felt need in Sydney theatre for a really double, rough space that can be completely re-made according to the needs of each production.

Indications for Richard of the direction that the company might take were provided by recent trips overseas by the Accord Contemporary Theatre in San Francisco where he was impressed by the sheer flow of personnel from rehearsal to stage, the busy day-to-day process and the double venue working situation in London where he saw the same company performing alternately in the Aldwych at Aldwych and re-emerge in Markit at the Warehouse in Covent Garden.

Fortunately there is no requirement to solve all the problems by the time the first production opens next year — the new company will have time to find its identity and Richard is convinced that the well-versed drive to see the new company succeed will provide a most favourable climate for its growth.

Our rowing reporter extraordinaire Douglas Flintoff assesses the

1979 National Playwrights' Conference

A Grand Event But Lacking Vision

Douglas Flintoff

From the back row of the Barton Hall Cinema House a disinterested, sleep-eyed figure stares and mutters "As the motion picture industry is going through a period of financial activity without equal since Jacobean England." The subject of this play is the only important note for the twentieth century. And a note at all — we can forget that note and move on! Little Billy Ellis, the downy boy of Australian Drama has spoken. The motion picture has done what it can, within its knowledge that the film medium has passed and for the seventh time, in human public meetings a truly great Australian play has been seen and acknowledged.

It is his mother's voice where the guy says "You gotta get in touch with the universe. That's the first step." And the other guy was quietly wondering what the second step is.

The American National Physiotherapy Conference and Thematic Conferences is an all-in-one event for you and your people were hoping that you don't change something that seems to be working perfectly well as it is—so they decided to be summing up season to have it done. This year people are asking: *Has the Physiotherapy Conference and Thematic Conferences?*

But first, is it even working? The old names crapped us yet again this year. Do the directors have too much power? Do they rule unchallenged over the poor unfortunate playwrights, governing on the virtues and virtues into crumpled poverty by the bright light of the Great Public Debate? Should the Conference worry about the plays or the writers? Should they look for great works that bring a flurry of characteristics to the local readings or should they remain the principal analysis of human nature? Do the directors

leagues take over too much? Should the playoffs be great skills training and historical information, or would this change the game?

The Playwrights' Conference is the only time in the women's lives that they will be confident and empowered to be used in such an extent. And in this was a great result at the end of the first week, led to by a group of women from Western Australia who wanted a bigger say in this process — which one would think would be above us, ordering as you could say, but they kept saying no. Probably the playwrights are queerer than the others — they have this process given passions to make — but one plus for the Conference was that the playwrights knew what they wanted to say and had it, if not always in their place.

The other group which makes the Conference the highly sensitive vehicle it is, is the action. The positive performance of the students and critics who used to run the show was thrown into deeper relief by the criticism, scornful, disapproving and mocking misconstruction of this group of little bodies whom we face in rather bad temper and bad decisions in conflict commercially and more openly (but to determine plays in theatres) but who keep bounding up their enthusiasm for the Playwrights' Conference, therefore is understandable. Their public commitment to their art along with the private position of the writers are the two poles around which the Conference and the theatre in general revolve.

Using these two groups, by giving them a common name for the disease. They are

always a problem. They have very definite ideas about the players they have to work with, which is the backbone workshops at the Chameleon can cause trouble. Sometimes they support their idea when they conflict with the playwrights, sometimes they rethink them, sometimes they actually seem to be on the same wavelength. At this year's Chameleon at least they weren't misunderstood by their directors, although they were all fairly tough — steady. The plays are still there to take away with them — but it makes the workshops possibly only a very slight crutch.

They can know one thing they don't want to do.

At the Conference were also various players of sports, administrators and academics who are beneath our radar here. There were also people called *chaperons* but nobody knows what they are or where they come from. On the whole people were nice. — *Ed. Brown*

The Playwrights' Conference also must shaking up a bit — just to see what would fall out. What is lacking at the moment are great and astute critics. There is no reason why writers and critics can't be companions but they don't want to be doing anything about it at the moment. It was the year of the Great Support for the writer's life, Minnow and Doubt and of generous, naive criticism for the actors but what would be good would be a simple or perfect, narrow minded if necessary, vision to be a all singular. (His life, talent was right when he said that the Conference was the most important event of the year, and that it became a great private love to pursue their dreams in peace. As in American theatre in general, it is a pity that the dream set so low.

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A new Children's TV programme is being made in WA for national screening.

Falcon Island

Terry Owen

Children's television with a difference — that's how the Australian Children's Film Foundation describes *Falcon Island* a five-part television serial presentation by the Foundation and currently in post production with national release scheduled later this year. The difference is that the action and adventure have to proceed using, for kids' television, stories that tell a number of contemporary social issues.

In the first five episodes, Kari, Paul and Jack who are part of the small Falcon Island community, become involved in a search for a Dutch wreck off the Western Australian coast. Their plans are complicated by a proposed sand mining venture that splits public opinion in their community and threatens the wreck site. The task, with help from their friends, first part of the actual war as the bulldozers are about to move in, and save the ship from total destruction.

The Australian Children's Film Foundation is administered by the Perth Institute of Film and Television (PIFT) who, about eighteen months ago, set up the Falcon Island project by getting Channel 9 (Perth) interested enough to put up money for script options and script development for a children's television serial to be made in Western Australia and aimed at the age group/family-viewing audience. Local writers Joan Ambrose and Ron Baines were commissioned to come up with a range of ideas for the serial.

While the search for ideas was on, PIFT was also looking for \$175,000 to fund their first package of producers includes the National Film Network, Channel 9 (Perth), the Australian Film Commission, the Western Australian Film

Council, Mr F Watson, W.A. Film Pty Limited and PIFT itself.

Joan Ambrose's initial adventure idea was chosen, and Sherry script editor Mary Wood came from Sydney for two weeks intensive work on the first draft material she had another working visit in January this year.

The next few *Falcon Island* was recruited locally, and includes Alan Crossell as a Sydney, Bernie Bartle and Bevan Lee. Director Peter Maxwell brought key technicians with him from Sydney to join the local crew, and the six week shoot was completed last Easter notwithstanding inclement cyclones, and the usual harembees involved in water shooting, where the maximum filming sequence simply isn't available.

It was a very tight working schedule and Peter Maxwell had words of praise for the local crew and their professionalism. He also made the interesting comment that the local scene would be a real 'plus' for producers looking to sell their film product on the tough Australian market, where the order decision is a very real obstacle.

For parents and public bodies concerned about the quality and content of children's television, *Falcon Island* sounds just the thing. As far as its makers are aware, it's the only cliff hanger serial for children in production in Australia. It's also one of the very few programmes based on original non literary material. PIFT as the production organisation have scheduled the final eight episodes of *Falcon Island* to go into production in October this year.

Joan Ambrose



You won't find *Falcon Island* on a map, it came into being on paper following a visit Joan Ambrose paid last spring to Rottnest Island, offshore from Fremantle and out of season a quiet village community of some 200 permanent residents.

Joan, who has had a lot of experience in the business of writing for children, named *Falcon Island* so be decidedly Western Australian, as she gave it a 17th century Dutch wreck which is Australia's maritime history, tells the women comedians can claim the treasure there is such a thing as Western Australian writing, and she sees no reason why Western Australian themes given high quality packaging and presentation shouldn't be successfully marketed nationally and even into overseas.

The theory that imagination is a source of energy and keeps for writers as well as painters and dancers and is confined to isolated places like Perth is far in evidence in working writers living among other places, as a village in East Angles or a small southern town in the great US of A. One of the problems facing those writers is that publishers and booksellers seem to believe in an article of faith that fiction with a regional setting is death to the market. But of course it can put a question of location. Joan Ambrose believes that the powerful impact of landscape on people and the ways in which people deal with each other within their landscape, are legitimate and marketable ingredients for a writer to work with. As a Western Australian, her aim is to write in the way fellow Western Australian writer Robert Dampier puts it.



Young ones shooting for *Falcon Island*



International Year
of the Child 1979

CHILDREN'S THEATRE

A Supplement to mark the Year of the Child

Theatre in Education

Release, Vocal, Concerned, Absentminded — not the usual adjectives to describe a schoolboy has recently the description of a group of people intensely involved in a theatre education production — groups of actors that one could also well happily be with anyone on occasion.

Gradually theatre and drama are getting more, now up-dated to include just and modern, not just in the curriculum but as part of the experience of learning. Whether it is through drama helping with number work for the primary classes, junior secondary pupils discussing the social aspects of *Let's Run Away*, the TIE play by Michael Cress about a thirteen year old girl who does — and learns to understand why and then it was not really necessary in the sixth formers' year 12 *Little Brother Little Sister* the English playwright David Crompton an old one possible tale of two adolescents who have grown up in a lonely shelter with only Cook for company. Words like freedom and understanding become salient to the modern times for any discussion following this, and the discussion will point up the play's relevance and the possibility that that relevance could be a part of life now or in the future. At a primary level of course children may even join in and become part of a play for the time it is at their school, for example in *Prometheus*.

This participative aspect is important, for in the National Report education and the Arts the joint study of the Federal Government and the Australian Council, it is noted that

... young people prefer a more informal and episodic form (of theatre) in which film and television have accustomed them

or they don't like waiting through the usual three act play, even if they do get the chance. The MTC in Victoria are also tackling this same problem but by asking schools for an all day programme where the performance and pre-dramatic side of the play is certainly discussed in the morning and after a special session there is more discussion if required.

With the TIE companies, puppet theatre, musicals, musicals and drama groups touring the schools, the input theatrically must be greater than ever before. Add this to the family con-

Ardyne Reid surveys the national TIE scene



Ardyne Reid in *Big B. John*
Photo: Tim Trigg, Theatre



Early try at I realise it. John Brown as Friday
in *John Brown*. Photo: Tim Trigg, Theatre

science, the family offers with various groups and both companies and the known children's theatre groups and workshops and the drama experience available to most children is doubled.

Without doubt though the difficulties, experienced by teachers of drama in schools are widespread throughout all Australia. Not only is drama a non academic subject unless linked with English for an literary merit, but it appears to be viewed with suspicion by the authorities and, as the media usually of the young and except second teachers, tends to be overlooked all too frequently.

Few schools have sufficient space for drama, or can offer only a programme such stage that doubles as an assembly hall, platform or a gymnasium for both, and suitable material and adequate preparation and follow up facilities to organise. This applies throughout the school years whether it is suffered by the primary teacher expected to teach it on a largely additional manner or the secondary teacher faced with script shortages or lack of discussion time following a TIE production — however direct or even worse off at most areas and film and television are rarely more than elective courses even at a tertiary level.

Maybe the differentiation between theatre education as a performance and drama — the workshop sessions in which students discover, exercise and develop their abilities both in the field of human relationships and in response, expression and movement — tends to be emphasised for the dramatic education can use this specialised teaching method to arouse interest, engagement and discussion a full range of topics from myths to modern languages. It is of course especially relevant to the humanism and the moral content. Since inadequate programmes rarely go beyond warm-up exercises and drama games and there seems to be a major difficulty in developing courses that combine development and exploratory aspects of drama with an acceptable structure and content, this becomes a problem area and yet it is essential that drama is complementary to the TIE, requires more rehearsal than State companies, touring puppet groups or local troupes to their

there's not to work as witness to human experience and not just fantasy on stage like a dollar page show.

Tasmania

Groups like Tasmania's Salamancas which go back into schools, the community at large and beyond, teach across subject divisions with an overall based on specified research and to meet communication through speech, music and drama must be close to the ideal — if it hasn't reached it. Salamancas like Tasmanian TIE company productions will have been well thought through for preparatory and post performance discussion in the schools before it is even offered to teachers from the requirement that two years' new production *The Whale* is accepted. Tasmania is lucky for Salamancas funded regularly by the Australian Council as a pilot theatre production programme and still supported to the extent of two actor teachers by the Tasmanian Education Department, a club to include both a writer and a school leaver effort in these groups. Their level is to cover all schools in Tasmania and they range broadly in both content and style — from productions like *Little Brother Little Sister* is a musical documentary stream of the trade union movement *It'll Be In The End or Prisoners*, a participative play about the creation of man for the primary levels.

But this is not to say that Tasmania is the only State with a flourishing TIE company.

Victoria

The Education Department in Victoria have produced a fascinating booklet on their Bourne Street 4, writing Theatre in Education. Recent production of *Old King Cole* analysing the effects of participation style communication and theatre improvisation as a means of understanding concepts of inhibition. Thence of course to a Drama Resource Centre staffed by experienced qualified teachers some of whom are working in TIE and who can offer a drama consultant on loan with the school advice and even team teach with a class teacher. No admission is charged.

The programme and personnel have reported some integration in 1977 and now

include two new county units — in Ballarat and Bendigo — but only because the Centre decided they were important and not their own staff to provide them. These TIE Community teams have each managed to get into primary school access to work with them. The Education Department in Victoria is behind the Drama Resource Centre as it is aware that integration against their criticism despite the awareness for example of the Selwyn Myers Charity Trust — but that must apply all over Australia.

Queensland

The Queensland Study Group on Education (1977) hold the view that

... no school system has been educated and it has been involved in at least one of the 11 major acts, both in doing and appearing, to the stage of having some understanding of the precise effect and possibilities of the medium and the probability came up even just a viewpoint. With an education state to cover — twelve areas each of which provides approximately four weeks work for a company leaving schools, the Queensland Arts Council's deal of one performance per term to every school in the State at a transition admission price of 50 cents is a major endorsement. TIE here is represented by the Brisbane North Education Region Team which produces a school selected language learning experience for the primary schools, are now being extended by the TIE team in Brisbane South and Brisbane West to provide a drama resource which generates facility with the process of language and expression in drama.

As elsewhere in Queensland the Arts Council was a standard for years, however, successful groups may also approach schools privately in which case the term for standard is on the principal in NSW the TIE groups are also subsidised by the Arts Council under negotiation with the schools to take drama into them.

New South Wales

The Tin Black Theatre is an example for NSW. Formed in 1976 it has been created by the Theatre Board of the Australia Council and the Sydney Centre and with grants from the Schools Commission and the Disadvantaged Community Action Programme. The Trust has produced programmes looking at the situation of migrants (Alan Finlay 1977), racism and racism (Mike 1978) *Black Norm and Abnorm* and joined in a multicultural workshop programme in two specific resource schools. Like the TIE in Victoria, Tin Black also produces a documentary drama for its adult teachers. It also provided its Service Workshops and entered a unit to NSW by the SA, TIE Team: Trust in SA, Education Department Team.

ACT

As with the rest of Australia, NSW children have a number of openings and minority programmes available to them. It depends on who is around and where you live.

For instance if you live in Canberra the figure Company's TIE programme to ACT and NSW schools are complemented by the Youth Theatre and the company the support and is involved in as all but facilities in the ACT Association for Drama in Education.

South Australia

The concept of drama as different from theatre is also specifically defined in SA where drama, as opposed to what is free flowing and relationship-oriented and the effective communication and theatre in education is seen to provide the skills and techniques of an actor and to provide a link between a real or possible story in a theatre and the school curriculum. The three government or Education Department, financed teams Troika TIE and the STC's Magpie group work in the schools together with an 1977 four puppet companies who are partially financed. Magpie 1978 festival presentation, the world premiere of *Chiric Africa* and the *Shakespeare* commissioned by the Capital Theatre "infused with magic and illusion" and a full use of all the Magpie.

Continued on page 48.



The Salamancas Theatre Company



International Year
of the Child 1979

COME OUT 79

Andrew Bleby *



There are great dangers in organising any celebration or commemoration of life's arts. There are temptations to capitalise on the coming stage of life — to provide patronising theatre, quasi-events in which kids meekly do as adults, and to take educational opportunities which suffer from being so overlaid with good intentions that they totally lack atmosphere or experience.

COME OUT 79 is a different kind of festival. It is a festival of ritual, civility and performance arts for young people in South Australia, and is possibly the most important arts festival in this country. Indeed, it claims to be the largest festival of its kind in the world, directly involving more than fifty thousand young people in Adelaide and many more thousands in country areas. Run by the Adelaide Festival of Arts, with major support from the South Australian Education Department and The Savings Bank of South Australia, COME OUT has also reached a stage of maturity where it can no longer be ignored by the media or the public as simply another thing for kids. When you discover that many of Adelaide's leading young artists have been working in the field deeply because of their experience with COME OUT 77, you realise that the far-reaching powers of such an artistic festival cannot be under-estimated.

Since its inception five years ago, COME OUT has developed to provide and support, on a relatively small budget, a balance of activities, covering the whole range of the arts, in performance and participation for all ages between four and twenty-four. A structure

such, you will agree, and one which this year gave rise to 76 different events amounting to over 550 performances, workshops, exhibitions and occasions over a two week period.

But size and scope alone do not make a festival. Unlike Adelaide's major festival of arts, the success of COME OUT cannot be judged by the numbers of people who played their parts in events or by the weekly, most ignored practitioners of the arts. Because we are talking of young people, we are talking of potential, and we are talking not only of the quality of the finished product, but the quality of the process through which those young people have gone. Processes are a vital part of COME OUT's raison d'être, and it is interesting to note that the most successful companies of COME OUT 79 were those in which there was real evidence that what we were witnessing was the product of young minds who had come to grips with their creative medium, and were able to use

it for their own expression, regardless of the traditional restraints imposed upon it by the adult masters of their art form.

At The Parks, a new school on the industrial outskirts of Adelaide, a group of young school girls were given the opportunity of not only expressing themselves through theatre, but looking at what they wanted to express. The result was *Only a Girl*, a recent style production presented with life and feeling about what it is like to be a girl, and what being a girl means in the rest of the world. It wasn't Shakespeare, and it wasn't text book feminism, but it had a thoughtful theatrical honesty that shone through to tell us that theatre could still be a powerful post or medium which doesn't have to remain the domain of a culture of the collected elite. A group of equally inspiring kids presented *From a King to a Ruler*, a performance dealing with the relevance of a small commercial enterprise by a large capitalist publishing company. Not only did the actors embrace the situation, but forced the audience to take a stand on it by using the media of radio, television and newspapers themselves to report on the performance.

COME OUT is not, however, simply a parade of young people's achievements in the arts. It also involves the "adult" arts and theatre world in working with and for young people. Age is thus helping to give legal wings to youth art in a world which will scorn and persecute the young if help is being given to established professional companies take responsibility.

Continued on page 16

*Andrew Bleby is Education Officer at the Adelaide Festival Centre, organising a varied programme of performances, workshops and other activities for young people at the Centre's four theatres. He is the South Australian delegate of the Australian Youth Performing Arts Association and a member of the organising committee for COME OUT 79.

Festivalchildren



Self workshops





International Year
of the Child 1979

FLYING FRUIT FLY CIRCUS

IAEN McCALMAN reports on the smallest circus organised by the Murray River Performing group and performed by eighty children under a big top in Albury-Wodonga.

People want to be amazed. They can't be always a learner, so yet they can't be always a watcher, they can't be made for it. You make him sit, Thoreau. So says Mr Steery, circus master and horseman in Charles Dickens's *Harems' Zoo*. For Dickens the circus represented the very essence of life, a symbol of natural man in a human community; an essence of the values of loyalty, imagination and joy against the drudgery of industrialism and its mechanistic philosophies. Steery Lyle, the child hero of his novel who personified all these virtues, would have found himself at home in Albury-Wodonga during the week of 13-19 May when the Murray River Performing Group staged their Flying Fruit Fly Circus.

For not only was this a circus dedicated to Dickens' ideals, but it was a children's circus as well. The performers were eighty children of diverse ages drawn from a variety of local schools. As eleven year old designed the poster, two other school girls wrote the theme song. Children avoided themselves in every stage of the production: designing sets, writing the "Circus On" bigtop making props and helping with stage management. Perhaps for this reason the leadership lived into the last of the first day looking rather self-conscious, expecting to have to apologise. But from the moment "the grand opening" began, their doubts seemed to melt away.

The young circus began to break into their circle their song, "The greatest show on Earth, here's the Flying Fruit Fly Circus" and the simultaneously revolutionary sounds of Bone (Lugh Cosloy) and his Bone Band fill the tent. Two children run onto the ring juggling. Tumblebug jump, somersault and land themselves into a twelve inch pyramid. A boy swirls in with flames dancing on his fingertips and musically begins to eat fire, while three firemen dash frantically about dousing; each other expertly. A waltzing mouse around the ring waving his hat, behind him looms an amiable camel. A goat hand waves back to the audience and cooks a burger in acknowledgement of their casual cheer.

Amongst the seventeen staggeringly professional acts that follow, a lion started out. Appropriately it is the 16 lions who start the first half of the show. Dressed in superhero costumes, accompanied by rock aerial music, they cluster up four ropes to perform an astonishing but graceful aerial gymnast act. And always there is a conflict: clowning to relieve the tension — the Silencers and their diabolical half-bowled baby, the subsequent firemen, and the acrobatic El Squealer performing Chaplinesque "Café capers". In the second half the acrobats of the acrobatic gym in a brilliant reversion natural act, in a charming brown bear train three skilful acrobats and even into life

by putting his hand in a boy's mouth.

The circus extends poems as diverse as the acts themselves. The five thousand who attended over five days included doing parents and grandparents, city men and school children, teacher-parents, youths and older, varied interests, businessmen and nurses. In part they reflected the attraction of an entertainment form which transcends social boundaries of class and age — in part it was the pull of lioning. The latter must go some way also towards explaining the mystery of the second reaction. The two adult acts, a dark, edgy and spectacular aerial display, produced an appreciative response, but the clowns' changed sharply whenever children were performing. It was like a great between a wild prize giving and the Melbourne Grand Prix, a compound of emotional sympathy, suspense, excitement and momentary pride.

The achievement of the children in overcoming personal diffidence, complete competence and adult scepticism to attain their skills in a team six weeks in training. Their disciplined dedication, concentration and sheer stamina (16 performance plus rehearsal in five days) would shame many professionals. Amazing teachers seemed incredulous at the demands made and met. Indeed teachers who balked at the notion of confining school curriculum might pause to consider the challenge associated with training eighty children of disparate ages and ages in the skills of clowning, tumbling, juggling, balancing, acting and juggling or the logistic requirement of organising these for rehearsals, prop making, make up and scene changing. Stranded teachers will perhaps build on the enthusiasm as future educational programmes, particularly of the circus it is becoming an annual event in the MRPG mind. Certainly the group must be congratulated for playing such a fitting celebration of the capabilities of youth in the International Year of the Child.

Evaluating the impact significance of the Flying Fruit Fly Circus for Australia is difficult in general and the MRPG in particular is more difficult. Unquestionably the circus is a unique artistic event. It is the first full children's circus in Australia, comparable only with Los Alamitos in Soan and the travelling youth circus in the USA, though differing from both



Flying Fruit Fly Circus

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International Year
of the Child 1979

Children's Theatre in America

CHRISTINE WESTWOOD reports that "Not one company appeared to see how and what they were really saying to children, and those who thought their work was somehow 'neutral' can't ever have thought that even a non-statement supports some of the injustices and pain of things as they are".

In March, the Professional Children's Theatre Presenters and Producers Committee in America organised a National Showcase of "some of the finest professional touring groups performing for young people today". This article looks at the aims of that Committee, what the Showcase revealed about children's theatre in America today, and reviews a selection of the sixteen companies finally selected to perform.

The formation of an official group within the professional theatre, such as the Committee, was an important step taken in 1977. Inspired up by the formidable Carol Jacobs of New York's Sprague Centre, the Committee represents "a unified front of over 100 people" trying to bridge the gap between those who create theatre for children and those who buy and present it: regional theatres, large art complexes, schools and community centres. The fact that such a body-building can be attempted at all is remarkable. If the promoters and the producers can indeed bury their jurisdictional antagonisms to work together, maybe the next National Showcase will not be such a misbegotten of unsatisfiable and unquenchable pay. And although the Showcase did not seem to debate the nature and function of children's theatre, surely this year's efforts signalled the need for a formal analysis concerned with that very event.

Part of the problem which only will be solved by the unlikely union of producers and presenters is the cut-throat competition between the producers for full bookings and one too many among the Committee's efforts to alleviate some of this competition by working towards joint funding and creation of children's theatre productions. For without such dialogue, who are compensating what might be "lost" in favour of ill-considered notions of what the producers want and children deserve, and then responded their errors by dismissing them with gloss, hypocrisies and quite misleading headlines, and making new productions as cheap as possible so that they become completely a liability to the producers? The producers' side is in difficult. Having little money within their own organisations' budgets for children's theatre, they are forced to choose the best of the worst, and in so doing, they themselves appear to lose sight of what constitutes good theatre.

It is hard to believe that all these people who have presumably chosen to work in children's theatre because of their own enjoyment of (and commitment to) good theatre, can be so unaware of the elements of measuring and challenging

theatre. If children, after seeing what was doled up to them at the Showcase as the "best", think that adults actually spend their hard-earned job-packets on such entertainment by choice, then they must only be adults in embryo. The productions represented at the Showcase do a great disservice to theatre, and must be object-averse to children. Children are not less sensitive, more stupid than adults — merely less experienced. As adults, our obligations and responsibilities to children, though an art to present truthful and aesthetically coherent work which extends them intellectually, emotionally and artistically.

My objection to nearly all the shows presented was the wanting of hope, optimism, love of the form and content. It is hard to imagine that in America today, people who are professionally involved in such a prominent aspect of our culture, can appear so totally oblivious to current educational and sociological research and writing. Not one company appeared to see how and what they were really saying to children, and those who thought their work was somehow "neutral" can't ever have thought that even a non-statement supports some of the injustices and pain of things as they are. By ignoring the social, cultural and political role of art, the children's theatre presented at the Showcase was quite not a category and responsibility.

I attended the Showcase as a personal promoter rather than as a reviewer. Therefore, my basic premise was "Would I buy this show, and if not, why not?" I have had to be selective, otherwise what I have written would be as dull and repetitive as the productions themselves. But all the techniques are on file at the Adelaide Festival Centre (Andrew Sisk) for people who wish to follow up the companies represented at the Showcase.

STAGE ONE
Los Angeles, Kentucky

The Men's Cottage written and directed by Moses Goldstein, is a play for adolescents which

deals with the often painful transition from childhood to adulthood as a positive necessity. It is dedicated to the memory of Blaneski Mend, and attempts to provide useful parallels for adolescents in contemporary western society. It is a serious effort to use the theatre to say something worthwhile, and to provide characters which are real enough for study about fiction by adolescents — and about life too. They are, for obvious reasons, a very difficult group to stage into a theatre, and yet the audience present at the Showcase seemed to have delighted in a play relevant to themselves. But why is it that the characters play out their problems in no particular "prestigious society"? Why do they wear hats and gowns from Moon, Hester, African and Australian Aboriginal cultures? Don Stage One think that hats were native the cultural ancestry? Or a Stage One occasionally saying that "all positive cultures are the same"? What would stage one's kids think if I presented a specially using whom play now either? Would we do, despite, except that in our theatre, and if not, should we expect teenagers to accept it? Yet this production is serious in intent, quite well written, with moments of great insight and humour, and would provide teachers with lively spring-boards for social science and sociology discussions. Would I buy this production? Maybe.

LOWELL'S THEATRE COMPANY
Pittsburgh, Pa

Review

What did I see of the children present, get out of forty minutes watching puppets bring pup through a number of camp routines? Would a child as much not already know enough about different styles of puppetry to do it themselves better? What value is there in having a doll child Anne puppet opening and closing her mouth to a tape of "Blaneski" (hardly heard from the stage show Anne)? What value is there in watching the film? Will everything be alright tomorrow, as the puppeteer promises the

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BIG BUSINESS AND THE ARTS

Is there enough business support?
Should the arts have to beg funds?
Where does the tax-deductible dollar go?

Pick up any theatre programme and you are likely to find a few lines in small print somewhere amongst the credits that thank specific firms for their help — someone for cigarettes maybe, or drinks, or the loan of furniture or musical instruments. It is a form of advertising and one does not think twice about it, it is a means by which the theatrical world and the business world can happily and easily be of mutual help to each other.

Lacking beyond this there is actually an enormous amount of support given, some openly acknowledged, some given in deliberately clandestine fashion. It can go so far that, if one were able to trace it, one would not have been able to function in that same theatre company would have no (except) if any of our larger firms had not come to their aid.

Surveying this area, though, what comes over loud and clear is that the big firms, as so often the case with federal and state agencies, go for the large establishment companies rather than using their aid to help the experimental, the innovative and the avant garde. Of course it is only natural that these firms want as much income to come from their tax deductible dollar as is possible to know in advance with the performing arts. But when so many play in the background their company is hardly going to get on its feet from the future of, try, a Queensland company theatre group or a Cape Breton music ensemble, to mention no others.

The Festival of Sydney was sponsored this year in a suitably high profile way by the Australian Gaslight Company, and the Festival of Perth similarly by the Perth Building Society, Bank of NSW or at Qantas is involved with the Opera and Rex the Australian Ballet for less. Ugh have backed the Australian Opera in the first and at the other end of the scale, paid for the revolving stage for a smallish theatre company.

Ugh did give \$2,000 in 1976 to the somewhat controversial Popular Theatre Troupe in Queensland for which Alan Ugh is based and gives its major commitment, but it would appear that once it is discovered that the company was playing shows which questioned the role of the big mining companies in the workers in the industry, retrospectively denied the grant to have been an establishment one and closed the purse strings from them on. Another mining company, Combelec, actually sent a small

tokened PR man from Melbourne to send the group after a suggestion from one of their shows had appeared on the Queensland Film Day, Tonight (AAR, TV).

Groups must, it seems clear, not be too continuous, be by and large big, established and established to attract ongoing "reasonable" support and if small only to look to help with benefits, material or hardware if they are to get any help at all.

There are available examples such as the Myer Foundation's support for the Murray River Performing Group. Myer may not generate actual income from this activity, but the benefits to the arts are substantial. It creates both community involvement, and the opportunity for children in particular to see and maybe participate in real live theatre — and therefore provides the embryo of a future audience.

To quote from the first annual report of AARTS — a company usually set up by Myer and others to pay for the relationship between the business world and the arts (and those which more need money) — it is accepted that

the community benefits flow beyond the immediate purchase of a theatre ticket, pointing at other product or services of the arts, and therefore justify the additional assistance of that the arts require.

Further, in some extent what industry is taking from people's lives, the arts are paying back, though here one is growing into such unquantifiable benefits in "quality of life". An argument can be mounted though, that the arts are providing a real service and should not be forced onto the merchant, Oliver Twist, position that they so often are.

Still, this additional income has to be found and established as an ongoing relationship. In times of economic stress it tends naturally to disappear — as though the establishments viewed the arts in such periods like last year's moment.

Overall there is ready support for both the conservative and the classical — especially the opera and ballet — major, technical engineering, scenery and buildings. The following is a survey, by no means exhaustive, of the kind of help companies give.

Ugh

Ugh have disbursed over \$75,000 so far this year. Their present policy is to give in such a way that a growing audience for the performing arts is created, hence major subsidy this year is going to the "Open Access" scheme. They are largely concerned with their home state and have funded a series of new plays by Queensland playwrights in La Borda as well as the Early

Childhood Drama Development Project there. But they have helped with hardware in other states, the revolving stage for Manton Street, scoring at Brown's Main Theatre, Darwin, and a sound system for the WA Ballet. Even these more unusual donations have been fairly conservative choices — a donation in 1977 to the Queensland Light Opera for Elph and \$1,000 to the Brisbane Actors' Company for an *Archimedes* play and \$10,000 to the QBC for printing programmes. Their other major area of support is for social sectors Queensland.



CALTEX

Some examples of Caltex's support are the Remington Programme, the Australian Opera and the Festival of Arts and Dance at one junction with the Festival of Sydney. They have also given the Shopfront Theatre for Young People, Sydney, enough for a good video set up, an electronic piano and a fair amount of photo graphic equipment, through their Youth Fund.



There spokesman's statement that "due to the support by Qantas of various cultural and arts groups, Australia is able to see many overseas performers and artists that would not otherwise be possible" is almost self-evident given the quite large amount of traffic in performers both ways that they handle free. However they want most of this to stay out of the public eye, their down for privacy is respected — their support appreciated.



Surely TAA have an occasion arranged for a group to have the exclusive use of an aircraft. They give contributions and to the Australian Opera and Ballet companies, work in with cultural societies and commercial organisations and their classical section has even arranged for security protection by the Commonwealth Police!



SINGAS The Australian Gas Light Company

AGL's sponsorship of the Festival of Sydney to the tune of \$100,000 this year, included the Festival of Pottery, the Gas Family Theatre and the New Year's Eve Party.

Peter Stuyvesant Cultural Foundations

This Foundation disburses about \$150,000 a year. Its credits include the 1976 visit of the London Symphony Orchestra, Ballet Schola

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Hewitt THE CHAPEL PERILOUS

Laroko University English III, University of New England Aust. Drama, Darling Downs IAE Drama, University of Queensland Contemporary Aust. Drama, Rensselaer State College Contemporary Aust. Drama, Mitchell CAE Aust. Lit. elective, University of Sydney Aust. Lit. & MA Theatre Tradition.

Hibbard A STRETCH OF THE IMAGINATION

University of WA Eng. Lit., Monash University Modern Aust. Lit., Melbourne State College 8 ed. (general secondary) Aust. Lit., Gippsland IAE Contemporary Lit. I, University of New England Aust. Drama, WA Institute of Technology English I Aust. Studies, University of Sydney Aust. Lit. & MA Theatre Tradition, James Cook University, English II, Aust. Lit.

McNeil THE CHOCOLATE FROG and THE OLD FAMILIAR JUICE

University of New England Aust. Drama, Goulburn CAE Theatre Arts II, Rensselaer State College Contemporary Aust. Drama, Mitchell CAE Aust. Lit., Mt Waverley Police Academy

Morris INNER VOICES

University of NSW Drama III Aust. Drama, University of Newcastle Drama I, University of Queensland Contemporary Aust. Drama

Reardon THE FLOATING WORLD

University of WA Eng. Lit., Laroko University English III, University of Newcastle Drama I, University of New England Aust. Drama, Rensselaer State College Contemporary Aust. Drama, Mt St Mary's Teachers College Eng. Lit. III, University of NSW Drama III Aust. Drama

Williamson DONS PARTY

University of Newcastle Drama I, University of WA Eng. Lit., Mitchell CAE Aust. Lit., Laroko University English III, University of New England Aust. Drama & Aust. Lit.



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Proliferation of Secret Britain Plays

Irving Wardle

British mainstream being what it is, the public discussions of the 1970s have brought with them a gradual descent of Secret Britain plays mostly berthing a fascist takeover, and coming into the existing body politic to show a convenient infrastructure of fascist police, torture, neo-fascist conspiracy, concentration camp contingency plans, and other crimes usual sort of which will soon be usable to add flesh to such up with America Special Research Bureau and the KGB.

Despite my resistance to this proliferation genre, I have to acknowledge that it sometimes yields effective plays, such as the latest example, David Leland's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (Royal Court Theatre Upstairs), a speculative thriller on Army counter-terror strategy which opens with a cunning false identity card, and develops into a vigorously dominated debate on the ethics of fighting terrorism with its own weapons. At least Mr Leland refrains, as few of his colleagues do, from presenting worrying possibilities as accomplished facts.

The grand-daddy of Secret Britain drama is Ronald Berman's *The Churchill Play* which the Royal Shakespeare Company have brought to London (Wardrobe) this year after its Nottingham premiere. It has not improved with keeping.

Originally it tacitly reflected the pliant apprehensions of the mid-sixties, but now that its original Kewford for 1964 is within reasonable distance of not coming true, the play strikes also something much smaller and more personally resonant, though it fits all too well into the RSC's chosen taken media repertory.

Rightly, admittedly, written better and has a much stronger grasp of form than most of his disciples, and the opening of *The Churchill Play*, with a gained of human movement round the dead assassin's coffin supplies a first shock more distant to the Churchill Camp of twenty years later, with a group of detainees rehearsing an entertainment for a visiting Parliamentary committee. Likewise, when the ten-jawed Womansong party do roll up for the performance the solemn ceremonial group retreat to Greg Stone assassins who can hardly get through their lines.

Between the shock opening and the bloody Sweeney finale, we get Berman's version of the new Britain, which up to the time for many a glum evening I have passed in the theatre over since. Freedom of speech has been quietly nullified; humanist camps have sprung up; terrorism with loose mouth journalists; shop owners and respect the the military feel like

being it. Once made, respectable depredation sends them to the back of top brass luncheon and cabinet guards. On so we are told. But if things are as bad as Berman makes out, the masses would never have got permission to put in a television show, made him to try the blame on Churchill for everything that has gone wrong since his death.

Berry Kyle's production is well cast and exerts its hard toned military realism and chaotic comedy, such as Raymond Wymell and Bill Burt's re-enactment of the Yalta Conference in a tin bath. But with this production I hope we have seen an end of prophetic revenge plays by self-styled geniuses whose only message to the spectator is "You've got it coming to you".

From imagined holocausts to a replay of the real thing in Martin Sherman's first *Royal Court*, set in the Germany of the mid 1940s when they really knew both in his internment camps. The picture — and it is a good one — for revealing this over-exposed shared home in the slum of the chosen victims I have in a general way that alongside the war interrogations of Jews and CP members, the camps also reveal homosexuals. Making systems and other ideas on the African landscape. I did not realize that in pondering homosexuals, the Nazis were simply enforcing an existing German law, nor that homosexuals released after the war had to keep their mouths shut for fear of renewed exposure, not that they are worthy, to this day, to stand civil examination. The last days of the First Silesian thus comes to be drunk and a better taste they have. All human in Martin Sherman for raising the spectre of these forgotten men, and the complexity of straight society in their face.

I would like to speak with equal admiration of his play it has in parts it is equally researched well organized, and self-consciously dignified in treatment of

homosexual attachments. It also achieves a theatrical concision from an action that describes a downward curve. The opening scene on Max and Rudy's bed could be taking place anywhere and any time, and when the SS arrive it is as if they were heading into past war home. On the run for two years, Max and Rudy are picked up again and put in a transport to Dachau where they undergo the usual sadistic tortures which Max survives by staying as order to test his love tools.

The scene is far as standardized, but at least it is essential. The central play really begins only in the second act, set in the camp, which consists of little more than a dialogue between Max and his new friend Horst, as they shift rooms from one side of the stage to the other, and back again, an extreme situation in which virtually nothing is happening. The dialogue is extremely tight within its tight limits, but what really keeps the pace alive is the occupation by two McKellen and two Bell that they are played for two audiences the paying spectators on the one, and the unseen camp guards who keep them under constant surveillance for any sign of slackness on the job, or physical desire for which there is finally driven to disclosure, banned on the prison wall.

None of which compromises for the anti-erotically mismanaged idea of a tender personal relationship blossoming in a German death camp. I know that Dariusz (1966) told them of the full horrors of Auschwitz and Buchenwald, but like them, it was a mass society sensationally organized to stifle individual choice and action. The idea that one prisoner could arrange to work with a friend and spend days of uninterrupted privacy with the partner of his choice, a case which shows how much has been forgotten of what was once common knowledge about the camps. And when Max, too, kills himself on the wire, there is even a case of how little it was for got in Dachau and learned about the first, otherwise his might have kept on studying around interwar's Berlin and would his whole life?

In brief, the National Theatre managed to beat the packer line and present Sherman's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* with every piece of Carl Esch's drive on. Roughly managed since. Thanks to some creatively original casting, and a playing style that carefully treats the documentary design, Michael Redgrave's production reveals the play as a remarkably brilliant dramatist of traditional British virtues, notwithstanding reports that Mather had shocked the theatrical canon.



Robert Beiler (left) as Max and John Anderson (left) as Rudy in the National's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*



Gasy Comedy LOSERS

SOURLYN HIDAAS

Drawn by four First Forum Theatre Company at the Playhouse and Albert Hall, Gasy, opened 7 July 1979.
 (Source: Theatre Australia)
 Andy Curry, John Caffie, Bruce Wilson, Tony Young, Frances Rose, Mike Wilson, Bill Ferguson, Chris Cassidy, the Matthews.
 (Professional)

The success of a series of satirical productions has by now established the tiny First Forum Theatre Company as the mainstay of Queensland's rather unadventurous theatre public as a provider of light and competent entertainment. Whether it will move on to challenge us, once its reliability is secured, remains to be seen. But the last time shows clearly fill a gap in Queensland.

With its last production, Pinner's *The Room*, the troupe moved into the Playhouse, making over three hundred. First last time shows have used the foyer of the large Queensland Theatre Society, the latest last time showing out for a week at the Playhouse, then transferred to the

overseas Albert Hall as part of the Arts Council sponsored Golden Jubilee programme to celebrate the old hall.

The rather slight play becomes a fairly diverting forty minutes mainly thanks to an excellent performance from John Caffie, backed up by a solid, but slightly ponderous interpretation by Tamara Ross, of the womanhood/wife played by her mother John Caffie handles with great ease the transition from the nostalgic monologues delivered to the audience, announcing on the events that made the town line out to them and the Philistines, to the flashback scenes. There is a lot of easy comedy in the early days of clumsy groping on a couch. Andy speaking, cursing lines of Gasy's *Elpis*... to restore the sanity Matt in baby blue costume for twenty minutes, and there is potential slapstick exploited to the full as the drunken Andy breaks the news that the old lady's seat has been sacked. She loses a seat, but gains a daughter on her side.

Much of the simple routine comedy could have been exploited with more imagination, the

direction of the flashback scenes is very conventional. In reacting to a cliché creature the flashback's 'Please let us God!' speaker looks silly and unconscious, and with little go to the lyrics' dilemma.

When I saw the play again at Albert Hall my earlier criticisms had disappeared, particularly on the part of John Caffie, who had to make over from evening rehearsal at the Playhouse/Conference throughout the season. But the problems of the awkward sex had not been solved. Rather they became more obvious as the audience was closer to the stage and had to crane their necks for the apologist on one far side and the drunken saint-bathing, crowded in between Matt's head and a precariously placed screen, on the other side of the stage. No example of adorning performance to open had been made.

Yet in transferring to new public service surroundings of Treasury, National Library and the old, Fortitude series as to reaching a new audience in need of something light at last.

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been popular successes. Dec. *Calender* became a deserved sell-out and is booked for a return season.

The *Physiome* automaton is compact, the acting area small and small. It is as if high on the back wall two small side rooms were carved out, and between them on the floor is a tight, semi-circular acting area, framed by the seating. Each time McGregor has used the *Physiome* — a large cast musical, a witty melodrama, and a comic poem — he has brought it to distinctive life.

The last two shows (*The Muscle Worker* and *Under Milkwood*) were dropped to run on weekly repertory and offered a conspicuous contrast. For the season with a hint of spring, many of the blind on Helen Keller: all was black and white with gaps between, and the story played itself out across the full apple basket us. For Dylan Thomas's *Llareggob* some mending, here and there had brightly coloured actors grouped on cushions in front of a picture, and like tapestry of the dream town, and flanked by the Narrators in high. No trace of the great world of the blind remained, all was green, pink, brown, yellow, apricot.

Ross McGregor's success in this theatre has as much as anything been his ability to create the atmosphere wherein his play can thrive.

The Muscle Worker is really the *Autism*, *Sellways*, *Story*, and *Louise Rush* gave her a quiet scene, portrayed. The next episode teacher moved through signs and attacks with such sticky little molecules that we were with her

all the way. McGregor's daughter Rusty was Helen Keller and the doll was proud she was the real for Louise Rush perfectly. She resembled incessantly like a pathetic teacher, making her teacher were her down, each for some trivialised silliness and learning. It was a strong life.

The play is less than kind to the actor: players they provide little more than barely background to set the main conflict going, and little extra perspective to it. Jennifer MacGregor made of Helen's mother perhaps the most significant exception to that. Her poised maturity often gave us an intriguing viewing point of the play's unhelpfully over-ambiguity.

Under Milkwood on the other hand presented the actors as a happy band, cheerfully in relaxed repose and playful action. They were charming guides through Dylan Thomas's Welsh town. Each member of the ensemble gave moments of their own special pleasure in their bounded roles between them like children. All as can the floor down to special mention: Jennifer MacGregor, Linda Cropper, Valerie Baker, Mary Hayes, Peter Fisher, Nerida Johnsons and Dylan Hughes. In cases of corporate trouble they showed off as a comfortable team. David Hughes and Louise Rush seemed well, though a few principally the group and the blackboard that opened Dylan Thomas's words to us with each planning warmth and colour.

Ross McGregor has not stayed at Newcastle long, but what he has done on stage at least has made the HWTC in the *Physiome* look a strong, flexible and successful company.

Continued from page 16

characters. This was what *The Hump in the South* scored. It was one of the few plays in the festival, as Peter Williams said, in which silence and music were well handled. And when people spoke (non-afkings), they sounded like they were in another room, rather than just being behind the end of the curtain.

Celebrations and suggestions are requested for an "Auntie Theatre" section to *Theatre Australia* (Please address all correspondence to "Auntie Theatre" Editorial Office, P.O. Box 306 Mayfield, N.S.W. 2284.) Reviews of single plays are probably of little interest except to the group concerned. Would you like more reviews of festivals or technical help or play suggestions — or — what?

Ron Langworth is the theatre critic of the Newcastle Morning Herald.

Continued from page 4

production.

A key scene involves the first QANTAS flight from Longreach on November 1, 1932. The first passenger, Arthur Kennedy, had already made the trip overland — it had taken him eight months. The flight took an hour. It is an excellent example of how aviation cut down the tremendous distances of the Queensland outback.

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Robyn Archer as Daphne Washington in *A Star Is Torn*. Photo: David Parker

Frequently edging on brilliance

A STAR IS TORN

RAYMOND STANLEY

A Star Is Torn directed by Robert Archer, script by Robert Fisher, Malcolm C. Croft & Alexander, (Theatre Media Company, P.O. Box 1, and Canberra Theatre Trust, in Universal Theatre, Friday, 14, opening 15 May, 1991, 8pm. Robyn Archer, Director, Miss Jackson, Lighting, Jane Lillis, music composed and played by Peter Black, (Archer, Croft & Croft, Canberra).

Robyn Archer is Marie Lloyd, Helen Morgan, Helen Morgan, Jane Lillis, Miss Jackson, (Archer, Croft & Croft, Canberra, Canberra Theatre Trust, 14, opening 15 May, 1991, 8pm. Robyn Archer, Director, Miss Jackson, Lighting, Jane Lillis, music composed and played by Peter Black, (Archer, Croft & Croft, Canberra).

The trouble with devising a show of the nature of an opening performance is that quite obviously it is going to be rehearsed, rehearsed upon and appear somewhat different to later audiences. As an example, judging from recent reviews, Robert Ramsey's and Ross Lovejoy's *The Starved From The Bush* must have undergone changes in performance, content and approach since that first performance before the critics saw.

As soon as the first night in Melbourne the multi-talented Robyn Archer presented to the audience eleven women just like she was created early in the evening, in most cases giving varying run-downs of their lives and

reading songs they allegedly were associated with. With the exception of Jane Freeman all are now dead and led pretty hectic, stormy lives, most ending in ultimately suicide.

Early in the evening Archer says "The ten women had between them almost thirty husbands, two never married, two were raped, two ended in brothels".

Pre-empting criticism of presentation of the ladies, a programme note reads "There are no over-sensational, they are celebrations of incredibly gifted women whose songs and lives caught the public imagination of their times and have continued to shape and affect style and consciousness into the twentieth century".

So when actually happens is that sometimes Archer manages to link with the change of hair style and slight clothing addition/similarity like the woman she is portraying, sometimes succeeds in capturing their visual characteristics, and at other times a bit off the mark in both instances.

In the very beginning the comes on stage and sings three numbers, the first "Can't Help Loving This Man", the Man Who Got Away" and "My Man". The first two are associated with Helen Morgan and Judy Garland, both featured in the show, the third with the unknown of Tanny Bree and Minneapolis. Was one of the ladies dropped from the programme?

Archer then goes into an astonishingly subtle impersonation of Bruce Smith, somehow managing to pull herself out and then around into a feisty lion as the same man filling in much detail on the singer's life and singing many of her songs (although not "Oh Daddy" which is available to Edith Watson).

Next, describing the struggle for the unknown Marie, Archer jumps into one of the two painted and sings "Someone To Watch Over Me". (Complete Lawrence of course! But no — it is supposed to be Helen Morgan) One would like to know what prompts Archer to associate that number, which was almost Cora's signature song with the first Julie in *Shenandoah* who certainly never recorded it. The Morgan sequence is one of the best involving in the show. Archer seems unable to support her sophistication, and the challenge is to sing one to ascertain whether or not a "hand up" is needed.

Then comes Judy Garland and, with her hair low and appropriate dress, Archer at the opening stage of Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*. She must have a thing about Garland because frequently throughout the evening Archer refers to her (and at various stages of her life becoming low and less like her and never recording vocally). It is though through Garland that she is able to project a few real

coloured numbers, in what is other singer's songs.

As the evening proceeds we see and learn about Billie Holiday (who Archer occasionally manages to catch vocally), Ethel Paul (a look and sound alike, but missed by the time we see her story is just over), Jane Freeman in clever word improvisations, Patsy Cline (just on and marvelously in it), Marilyn Monroe (looking like, and the show's biggest feature), Daphne Washington (great fun and occasionally liked and Jane Lillis who, if the amount of time devoted to her is any guide, must be Archer's favourite).

Starting the second half is the rocking musical ballad Marie Lloyd, great fun as presented by Archer, but I suspect more like Lily Moore than "Our Miss". Detail is spent on the show on Marie Lloyd and Archer only sings one of her numbers (only). "It's A Bit Of A Kiss That Crossed My Mind About A Bit". Although it was Marie Lloyd's most famous number, as far as is known the never recorded it (although Marie Lloyd for did). Listening to Marie Lloyd's records one feels a much thinner and sweeter voice than Archer provides. Yes, to me it sounds more like Lily Moore.

The last moments of the show is a bit to understand in Archer being herself, not a pot-pourri of all the singers or what? It can easily be debated.

Archer is an stage exactly one hour in each half of the show (backed by two live pianists, in actual fact it all seems much longer). It is so amazing, between performance the provided, frequently edging on brilliance, and must be most taxing on her. It is the first time I have seen Robyn Archer perform, and certainly hope it is far from being the last. In my opinion she has attempted to embody the many characters in the show and if she concentrated upon five or six possibly could convey more and one would be moved by the contrast, which is actually not the case.

I believe direction could be improved upon. Sitting right in front of me was Ray Livermore's director Peter Barry, and he thought constantly were through my mind how much more stimulating Barry would have made it.

The commercial management combined in producing Robyn Archer in this show are to be commended. It undoubtedly will receive much artistic acclaim and one hopes will do equally well at the box office.

This show also marks the first really professional presentation at the Universal Theatre and hopefully will put it on the map. The theatre is not without its problems, but it should be possible to soon clear out.



Emphasises narrative, melodrama

CHANDLER, H. L. 1959. *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* 52: 103-104.

[illegible]

Coaches, referees, friends on and off the team as the play was evident, seemed really and friendly enough to get along with. In Madisonville it is a local play, the sort of thing the NFL should have been doing regularly for years (and here — even call this a real).

grown over a glass or steel of 400 Pounds. In 1890



L. A. Jeweller (Claire Cluett), Elizabeth Alexander (Rana Perloff), David Donovan (Goran Senozoff) in the Melbourne Theatre Company production of *Arms and the Man*.

Sharply satirical farce in comic opera style

ARMS AND THE MAN

SUZANNE SPUNNER

Arms and the Man by George Bernard Shaw, Melbourne Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Festival, 1995. Director: Max Linder. Music: Alan Jones.

Arms and the Man is a comedy farce in comic opera style. It is a play about war, but it is a play about the human condition. It is a play about the human condition, but it is a play about the human condition. It is a play about the human condition, but it is a play about the human condition.

Arms and the Man is one of George Bernard Shaw's earliest plays — it was written and first staged in 1894 and at the time received popular acclaim, although it was not until the 1950s production of *Arms and the Man* by Berio and Venturini that Shaw achieved the fame and notoriety we now associate with his name.

Arms and the Man is set in the 1870s Belgian-Serbian war in the Balkans. Its central theme is the demystification of the play of war and the heroism of fighting soldiers. However, to approach the play as merely being about war and war songs and music, reduces the changing couplings of the lovers in the play to the status of a decorative sub-plot, whereas there is ample evidence in the play to read it as a satirical attack on Romanticism as it affects and reflects both human relationships and attitudes to war and heroism.

This approach brings into sharper and more consistent focus Shaw's views on women as well as men. The plot has elements of a *Chorégraphie* of sincerity and fidelity of affection, but it is more even-handed in that it presents the equal-duplicity of men and women. Shaw's satire against Romanticism are strengthened by his looking at with the realism and irony of the young bourgeoisie. As Berio was to show later in *Arms and the Man*, the working people cannot afford to live by Romantic ideals. Shaw wrote,

'...because, which is only a Romantic want for romance in politics and morals, is in substance as real as romance in ethics or religion'. He might well have added love relationships to his list of potential Romantic disasters.

The tone of the play is set in the opening scene when Rana Perloff, the impressively and provocatively lived daughter of a major in the Belgian army, declares in high pitched schoolgirl hyperbole that her solution of the horrors of her father's war, Senozoff, derives from Pushkin, Byron and the Romantic Opera. The absurd and lightish heroism of Senozoff's leading a wounded or maimed charge which happened in war, is parodied in a later scene by Rana's father, the Serbian soldier and pragmatic realist, as the natural "war-opera scene".

Elizabeth Ray Linder took his cue from these pointers and shaped the play as a vigorous comic opera. By playing to the full the absurdities of the plot and the exaggerated character types, he created a highly entertaining drama which still made all the subtle points Shaw intended without ever becoming pedantic or didactic. Linder's strength as a director lies closest to the art of theatrical comedy and he called some fine comic performances from actors who were cast in more serious roles and less inspired.

David Donovan brought some brilliant flourishes to the role of Senozoff from his first entrance, he was a study in bombastic precision — flailing arms, an over abundant but clipped movement and bristling white coat — and a parody of heroically dramatic gestures, never more so when his gloves finger point by finger point was their delight. As Rana, Elizabeth Alexander began in such a high register that it was difficult to imagine where she could take the part; however she contained the vapoury heroism and made convincing Rana's transformation into Rana's father's wife — the tough minded woman who could get exactly what she wanted as soon as she realised it was what she needed.

Rana's parents, the Major and Mrs Perloff are the local interesting characters, being the

rebates for Shaw's plot at the Belgian/Serbian romantic war, but as the mother Jennifer Cluett brought out the full tragedy and opportunity of the role. Edward Haggis was at ease in the controlling, Socratic like centre role of the grasping, venal Phloxie. But it was Claire Berns as Louisa the servant girl on the make and John Scrimm as Bluntschli the "commercial traveller in uniform" who stole in the early hard edged performance that kept the production sharply relevant when it showed a tendency of becoming totally farcical.

Arms and the Man was as shocking as it was ironically subtle and distanced from the comic director's Regency series of adapted a line for those moments transcending to modernist music but hardly constitutes a creative input into a serious theatre production. Ironically the set exemplified the very thing Shaw was criticising — cluttered box realism, it was a vision of the expensive gallery and not like enough to be honest.

Continued from page 15

ships in International Peace Competitions and a scholarship for Strang in 1977. The 1984 Congress in Sydney involved them for \$14,000, they sponsored the Young Theatre Company of Sydney for the 1978 Writers' Week in the Adelaide Festival, and the South Australian State Opera Company in 1978. Through its varied concerns was with paintings, the funds of up to \$150,000 a year are now disbursed either generally.

Ironically — as the brief and selective survey indicates — the art's very creativity that is recognised as vital to the health of the community, can also be its own financial ruin. Like now, the creative, the exploratory, the avant garde, the radical and the avant garde, which should keep our performing arts on the verge of social thinking, make strange bedfellows for the conservatism of the business world and too often too much for all that the very bold.

It is not to reflect that the old adage that the rich get rich and the poor get poorer extends to a disturbing degree to arts funding. The arts industry is a multi-million dollar concern yet while it needs huge sums to survive, it must not allow for corporate thinking to snuff out its vital spark and leave it a huge but useless monster. Business men must be persuaded to provide risk, no-defensible capital, as they would for research departments within their own firms. Funding from whatever source must be seen as affording artists the right to fail in their search for the new, the innovative and one word for tomorrow — not just to allow bigger risk, costlier costumes and pioneer programmes for conservative and established companies.

(Big Business and the Arts should meet weekly on the role of ARTS — a unique concern to encourage the private sector to give more support — and also discuss other issues.)

eyes/ears throughout with a parade I'd not suspected he possessed. Lee's main agenda was genuinely funny and he too revealed with his performance a flexibility and a capacity to stand what I'd previously thought was a somewhat limited range as an actor. He made an excellent foil for Lynda Croon, the company's matriarch. Was he terrific, whether sampling, singing or dancing exactly as he should have done — simply lovely.

See Hensell's design for the single set, the interior of an English country manor house, was properly lush and also cunningly contrived to allow the mishap-lane functioning of such gimmicks as the aforementioned staircase, lean, vase and garret, as well as sundry homestead chandeliers and posies durt first appearance. The check list, by the way, must also item Christine Randall whose stage management of a show calculated to give us *Sid* the ascending better potshots must have been excellent, since all the bits of business seemed to happen bang on time. The orchestra was under the direction of Derek Bond (ex-husband of Hensell's *Kate Winslet*) and played quite well, although the fairly standard arrangements did not help the general incoherence of the entire much.

So much then for who did what. Only one thing remains to be said. I know why, hence the *Sid* was three quarters full on Thursday night. Something's Afoot was produced for The National Theatre at the Playhouse, what I don't know is how the National Theatre management is able to reconcile such crassly obvious commercialism with the National Theatre's policy as proclaimed in its programme — "To provide entertaining and stimulating theatre of quality, producing the finest from the classical and modern repertoire." No-one, I suppose would object to the National Theatre doing out its subsidies with the odd now and then money upstairs here and there, but it seems odd to have the credibility gap pretty-quick so wide?

Celebrating a memory SWAN RIVER SAGA

MARGOT LURE

Swan River Saga by May Burch is Group 1 play from the August Festival in 1975 (based on the 1977 Doris David novel). It has now been revised (1980).

Swan River Saga the second time round is more of a celebration than a simple evening as the theatre. It is part of the WA Sesquicentenary which is dedicating the State and both the theme of the play and its venue are supremely appropriate to the occasion.

Perth's oldest theatre, the small St George's Hall, a charming remnant of a Grade I listed building, serving as the central lay drama, has for many years done duty as Government office space — even now a belongs to the Health Education Council. It was established by theatre enthusiasts a hundred years ago, and now refurbished proves that its addition to its classical facade is too lovely sometimes, though the relationship of stage to audience will need some rethinking.

The Saga is the story of the first fifty years of the Swan River Colony, seen through the eyes of Eliza Shaw, one of the first settlers, who conducted a full and interesting life with a rare gift of expressing her feelings and recording her experience with poise, wit, maturity and humour, giving Mary Donohue a wealth of material to fashion into a lovely portrait.

May Penfold has made the play her own — she is Eliza Shaw and the extraordinary feat of carrying the monologue unperformed, yet supporting countless passages on stage every long in the memory. In fact, having seen it seven years ago, my own memory had somehow missed the "other" characters in three dimensions, so

that the reality of the empty stage came as a momentary shock of surprise.

The play has been created of some original interdisciplinary material and in the better for it. There is a fascinating vignette about the late 70s as a memory, including from beginning to end, and the two scenes of departure (first leaving England then leaving the property behind) provide a firm structure for the intervening years of years.

Highlights remembered from the earlier production still stand out. Eliza's disillusionment expressed with matter of fact wit in her first scenes from home — then, the best scene of all, her lively account of the Governor's Ball celebrating the Colony's second anniversary — but a scene with a young granddaughter nearby that eliza was there on stage? and finally the sedentary questioning by the old woman of the family at a lifetime of work and suffering that brought forth nothing but "bad is proper".

Admiring with noted scenes of Eliza conversing with visitors and family there are episodes from dances and letters, where the reading voice is accompanied by excellent slides of paintings and sketches showing the beginning of Perth and environs.

The staging of the current production is less skilful than the earlier one at the Playhouse at the Wall. The stage is awkwardly high and although good imaginative use is made of period props and furnishings, the background setting is ugly and clumsy, and the lighting harsh and insensitive, making it difficult for the imagination to accept the obviously created visible presence.

However, *The Saga* remains a treat to define, and one wonders if any other actress will ever tackle it. It will survive as a piece of dramatic history that transcends purely regional interest yet is firmly rooted in the local soil, at the same time standing as a loving memorial to a woman who cast her lot in the quinquennial pattern with

COMMENT continued from page 2.

comment, who are so popular they get 80% of the door before the show even begins, so we are forced to cut our magazine down to a paltry number, a robust pre-empting thing to do, added generously to the always deflated and nearly always a parade to another. Horace will be full of editors, rewards, scraps, false news, lightning grids, puff and denunciations, right will be no room for the attack or even God himself, who no doubt will be forced to work for the ABC, no doubt, in *Saved Effects*, or *Special Projects* with his teeth in a glass, and no work elsewhere to do.

So, in conclusion, we need to appeal to our best capacity: donor support (from our ideological brethren). The Government, Carback, Carback and Carback have to have their set services, and their golden Hollywood moment where there is a cheap knock knock in the decompression door as the war makes up before the illuminated

interior and a noise (linked) with agency, and yet delight says, "Five minutes Mr Carback" will become his Australian voice saying "All the time in the world, Mr Carback" for Mr Gilbert Carback, Carback and Carback become Wombles, Elegance and Glory.

There has never been a national theatrical monthly reviewing, promoting and sponsoring ALL theatre here, that is the only one. The land of dumb right-wing weeklies are heavy in the slant, but *Theatre Australia* is a ray for all seasons. What we need to survive the land of blind cat throat bloody murder going on everywhere is the sympathy and soul to use that our theatre is not tolerant and a few bats for the heart by way of conclusion, but an unambiguous commitment in pure wonder. Blackford, Carback and Blackford need to work up a totally new act.

We take a deep breath, get our teeth in, and go out and show the laws (that, Christ, some bastard) has pushed the wheels, and look at all that knock knock.



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COME OUT continued from page 13.

beyond suburban beliefs. Adelaide's three major state-subsidised companies, The State Opera, the State Theatre Company, and Australasian Dance Theatre, all prepared major programmes for young people as part of COME OUT, and their respective productions provided creative training opportunities.

The State Theatre Company presented their young performance venue, the Playhouse, to their Mopie Tili, runs for a production of local writer Rob George's play *Grubbing A The* term has a strong reputation throughout Australia for its excellent Theatre-in-Education work, but suffered slightly at the hands of a script which while not devoid of interest, has been compared to an episode of *Britford*.

Australasian Dance Theatre on the other hand, came up with a masterpiece of dance and theatre in *Fairy Children*, a stunning collection of images and motifs of childhood prepared by Anne Taylor from the thoughts of eighteen young children, who dance in the production under the collective title of "Memory's Little Starlings" with seven members of the ADT company. Perhaps it can be seen as a tribute to the existence of COME OUT that it has spawned one of Australia's most moving and beautiful theatrical events which though created in the name of children, is neither patronising nor naive, in thought or imagery. Anne Taylor gave choreographed notes to these children and they proved beyond a doubt that their voice must be heard.

Having the voice was the least of the problems, writes at the State Opera's production of *Shogun's Britain*, itself being

Let's Make an Opera. Young people often made up a sizable proportion of the cast, but it was a self-consciously adult production, started with middle class values which looked off the stage in profane proportionate to the Cosa Lode which flowed down the throats of the young singers. For a production which, by its own admission, attempted to prove that "opera is not stuffy and artificial" it achieved little to make the stage.

There are bound to be failures in a festival such as COME OUT and the arts world often is slow to catch the cultural needs of young people, but it is important to point out the successful blocks of the stunning success of COME OUT is hidden away in little rooms or in small corners of a park where kids are learning and creating, manipulating the arts on their own terms. The successful musical arts programme of COME OUT 79 was a notable public success, wherein took no shape of the industrial barriers between vocal and performing arts, but welcomed heretofore ignored a daunting sight for Adelaide citizens when they appeared in city places, a large audience was amazed by a cascade of ingenious, heart-warming videos at the "Pseudoballoon Lament" event and people are still being delighted by COME OUT's legacy to the State Transport Authority on the doors of a train painted with landscapes by high school students.

Adelaide's COME OUT is now established as a major artistic force in South Australia, a self-sufficiency from a low profile on a national level, and even a local ambivalence towards youth and makes a hard commitment to reach the kids who might benefit most. But COME OUT must always be run with a primary concern for quality and the cultural needs and desires of young people. And with this in mind, about, where just over for savings?

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Following the success of *A Manual of Trench Warfare* in South Australia, Brian O'Connell (Clem) Gorman has returned from residence in London (where one of his plays was produced at the King's Head) to take up a writer in residency with the State Theatre Company, Adelaide. *Trench Warfare* is to be published in the Currency/TA New Writing Series.

Clem Gorman

Let's Explore Australia

There is an uneasy flourishing trend in Australia (theatre over the past decade) that the growth of Australian content and self-confidence. Amidst the changes and the unemployment, that stands out in the memory like a sunny day in London.

Yet it remains true that in the head-on battle of form there have been too few attempts to create anything new — anything growing from original Australian roots. The theatre in Australia is still more Shakespeare than Australian in form. I am not endorsing in the easy game of knocking Australia. The standard and values, the short maturity, of Australian theatre compares at least favourably with anything that is happening in the UK. But a verbal theatre with European roots can be Australian in content only.

What would an original Australian theatrical form look and work like — what it was at home?

To answer that question one need only look at the elements that make up Australia. The country first, its hot and spacious, so perhaps an open air theatre using large spaces. It's in Asia, so obviously influences from other Asian theatres would be present, the slow unbroken music of the *Noh* might adapt very well, or the colour and constant movement of the Balinese dance which so impressed poor old Artaud. Australians, although seen as Asian people with their own highly developed symbolism and religious theories which must obviously be a powerful element.

Of the European population, probably slightly more than half are of Celtic origin. The Celts had an extraordinarily rich theatrical and visual culture, based on magic, which has been left behind by English imperialism. Celtic Australians are denied, in their education system, any knowledge of their cultural roots. So this, too, must play a part.

The reader might be thinking, at this point, that it looks like a messy jacking any one of southerly which would slip through the system like the proverbial and make about as much lasting impression as a glass of liquid with. Not so, because of these elements have certain points in common. They are voluntary, they are concerned they involve more music and dance, song words as much as spoken. They

emphasise what you are as much as what you hear: they are not predominantly literary, and hardly intellectual at all.

It would still require scripts, but scripts in which songs and stage designs would be of equal importance to the dialogue. It might involve the use of quite a lot of media technology. After all, Australia is a country that was born out of the Industrial Revolution and Australians feel very much at home with technology.

What about the content of the Australian theatre? Not too different from the content of Australian plays, probably. The themes of Australian theatre have been well researched, the persistence of an urban country that is vast and empty, the struggle against the Jewish clock on the individual and national level, Catholicism, materialism, suppressed homosexuality and all the rest. An Australian original theatre would have to tell a story, poems are part of the heritage. In short, any content can be woven into a fabric, the key difference would be that the literary content would not be everything. When theatre began in Europe it was a principal form of communication. Now that job is done by media, what job can theatre do? I think the answer — and it's a highly personal answer — is that only theatre can provide, within the context of a tale which reflects the conflict experienced by an isolated, immediate, live human contact with all its fallibility. The weakness of the live theatre — its very human vulnerability — is its great strength as an art when many people are used of the no-risk involvement of TV or cinema. Merely to raise the curtain in the theatre is to embark upon a risk of failure, as they say, this is what there is to be alive, and this is a formal consideration, not one of content.

There is a Fringe company in Britain called Shared Experience, and while not waiting for a moment is suggest that Australian theatre should again accept, look back and forward in an universal mood something made in Britain. I must say that this group works in a way that I imagine might be very close to the way an

Australian original theatre might work. The actors improvise around a given script spine, based on well known historical tales — KOOL Haka, or whatever — and they work all over the stage, in and out among the audience, telling everything at each and every moment, usually vulnerable yet totally in control. When a mistake, which is usually, is a accident and groping. I can imagine disrupted theatres working like that, or Celtic Drama is a powerful, immediate, participatory, yet narrative, not so strange as, merely make judgments with people and images.

I believe there should be established — and not should not be interested in all the reasons why it's impossible (no funds, no confidence, 'experimental theatre fails too often') — a fully-fledged, funded, experimental company to explore Australia. When it fails, it should be allowed to. There is some in which theatre can't have simply cannot fail, though it must, sometimes, just as scientific experiments fail if progress is to be made. The point about the right to fail should be clearly understood. To bring the whole weight of the literary about appearance of European style theatre criticism to bear on an exploratory theatre is an excellent example. Such a theatre might operate best not as a public theatre in the usual sense, though public performances would of course be given, but more as a college or study centre.

Of course there are funds. Australia is one of the world's richest countries, with an unemployment rate, even in these 'hard times', that is the envy of any Third World country — and not a few European ones. Per capita income is still in that the big list in the world. Who can put a price on the beneficial results of a people who have always looked confidence when comparing their culture of product with that of others, discovering that they have got something that is uniquely and singularly their own to contribute to the world's storehouse of theatrical riches?

This will never happen while Australia is content only to imitate Europe and North America. Australia is not just a European country, it is itself, but it is not an Ugly Duckling. It is not even a duck. For it is a swan. It is something else, a new thing, waiting for its new reflection in its finished look as it flows into surroundings. I think it's time the exploration of Australia began.

A Sense of Insecurity

Do amateur theatre groups feel insecure? The question springs to my mind again and again during the week Newcastle Arts Council drama festival, held in late May.

Despite a wide range of moods, play after play seemed to have, in an instant a sense of insecurity. There were the sillinesses of the comic-strip character Charlie Brown, the worries of two elegants about being buried as pagans in a strange land, a Tennessee Williams grand-dame asking the numbering of her social points, an out-of-work Noel Simon here lately meeting against the odds that is New York, a shy young London clerk taking in his teacher's attempts at wooing, and so on.

But any thoughts that the choice of plays reflected the collective mood of mind of these presenters were dispelled as the wins and losses got together which followed the presentation of awards at the final session. Normally, the award comes from the festival under the Arts Drama Theatre at the University of Newcastle to the adjoining Staff House for the function. This year that building had been booked for another function, so the nearly three hundred people who packed the theatre stayed on at, glowering at first into the narrow line area between the tiered seating and the stage, but gradually moving — perhaps one should say sneaking — to the rear stalls.

The talk was of course about the festival and it was all looking very reminiscent about the time of its first year but so liked the way this year did it. Many people found that last time of being down of last more rewarding than the midweek ones mounted by adjudicator Peter Williams or his more detailed backstage discussions with the cast and crew of each of the fifteen plays. I found myself talking for a few minutes to Norman Schofield, author of one of the festival's most effective plays, *Three Ladies*, and he outlined some which had been made in the production and which, he believed had weakened it. But did then? I asked. As staged at the festival, the play was a bit too long and a bit too repetitive, despite having a marvellously well-rehearsed and accurate in which three scenes of very different personalities portrayed, as parallel these stages in the life of a young girl who becomes pregnant and leads a recklessly hard to come to an award mother.

And this is the real value of drama festivals for amateur theatre. They enable people from far away areas to get together and look at and talk about each other's work, even if as in the case of the Newcastle festival it is only for two weekends in a year. And, while the award of prizes is a controversial subject, it does provide for a sense of competition, an eagerness to do better and to see whether you can pay the others and take home what Peter Williams called something

Ken Longworth

reports on Newcastle's major amateur festival which was adjudicated by Peter Williams.

cynically "the pot".

Mr Williams is the first adjudicator to have filled that role at two Newcastle festivals. He did the job in 1973 and had two comments to make on the differences produced by the intervening four years. He said the standard of performances had improved greatly, but he also expressed disappointment that the choice of play had not. He appeared to amateur groups to read most widely because there were "some wonderful plays" and up to his time which amateur groups never read. I pressed him later for some ideas as to what sort of "wonderful plays" he meant, but he was on route to giving a well-deserved cup of coffee and digesta a promise to return to discuss the matter further, he was weighed in the making, though so that my question remains unanswered.

It was a pity because his comment on the range provided me. The plays chosen this year were a very good selection, with most of the amateur drab like at *Agatha Christie* and a couple of Most Covered poems which turned up in 1973. Authors represented included Samuel Beckett, Tennessee Williams, Tom Stoppard, Noel Simon, Peter Sharkey, David Crompton and Ruth Park. Many of the better productions were from the pits of not so well known writers like David Huxford, Norman Schofield, Marilyn Grey and John MacLennan, with the festival offering the Australian premiere of the last named's fascinating study of loneliness among men: *Three Women*, *Shout* by Ned and *Whirl* by Lundy.

The standard of production and playing was the most balanced for years. Until the premiere season it was virtually impossible to pick winners. In that season *Three Ladies* played parts of its excellent production at the Ruth Park Ladies Room adaptation of *The Day in the Bush* which quickly became the favourite for three of the awards — best production, best Australian play and best actress (Kathleen Hamilton as Marlene Darcy). As a result, too, a lot of other and two others heads with Rosalind Murrells who also decided, taking out the best supporting actress trophy in *Goodness* and the sharing of the festival's technical award with another Sydney production *Phantom Theatre* at a Sydney Place (disappointing).

Sixteen groups are participants at the festival each year but they don't dominate it. There were at least six day groups represented often by more than one play. There were three from

Newcastle, one from Maitland, and one from Armidale, the very energetic Armidale College of Advanced Education Drama Group, whose experimental work is always worth watching and hearing. For the third successive year, the CAE took out the adjudicator's special award for a play called *A Journey Into Inner Christal Space*, devoted as an entertaining way of exploring to students the functions of the various parts of the brain.

An interesting feature of the festival and the element of MPE meant to be used was the award showing by women directors. Only four of the fifteen plays had a woman at the helm, but they were among the best all round works in the festival in terms both of entertainment and of quality. Apart from Rosalind Murrells' *The Day in the Bush*, Ross Puckham's production of *The Contract* (acted by Marilyn Grey) for Elvira Players, not second prize (Celia French won the best actress award for his role of a woman angrier at the play) and the other two from women, Jan Cooper's production of *Three Ladies* for Wingham Players and Shirley Bloomfield's second act of *The Presence of Second Avenue* for Newcastle Recreation Club could well have been winners. (Three Ladies did take out the most promising actress award with Sue Leith the recipient.)

Peter Williams commented on the strength of the female performances and the difficulty of making his choice in their category, but the male performers this year also were good. Last year, the adjudicator was searching to find award winners among the men and several groups were borrowing the fact that they just couldn't afford male actors. This year, matters seem to have improved and it no longer looks as if amateur theatre will become an all female domain.

The strength of male playing was shown by the award of the best supporting actor trophy to Marcus Williams in a controlled husband in *Warehouse Theatre*'s production of *Heart* Harrowers *The Last Two of the other three* actors in the comedy of chaos could have been considered for acting awards. (*Warehouse* is a Newcastle group which has brought dramatic theatre to the city, was the third prize for the play, directed by Ian Watson.) There also were several actors who could have won the most promising actor trophy awarded to David Sandy playing in *Shallers The Presence of North* Shout Players.

No play at the festival was perfect. One last from which came off well, was one late entrance on most quality. Time and again Peter Williams commented on the falling of players into the trap of making up each other's moral system so that there was not enough differentiation between

(Continued on page 22)



Let's Make; Secret Marriage; D'Oyly Carte

Adelaide and London were the focal points of this particular season month for me, though big things were also going on in Melbourne (that I missed because I had seen and reviewed them before) (*The Mists of Haverley* and *The Triumph of Moses*) or would soon (those shortly later the new Australian Opera production of Puccini's *Cry of the Golden West*).

In Adelaide, State Opera came up with an interesting mixture of the old (*Camacho*) and the relatively new (*Bohème*), as they jolly led off temporarily transplanted London (known, more generally as the Ragtop Theatre, Sydney, D'Oyly Carte was presenting Gilbert and Sullivan in its most traditional

The unimportant highlights of the month was I believe topical presentation of *Let's Make A Secret Marriage* in Adelaide — especially the first two-thirds, the parts that come before the proper opera within the performance.

Which may call for a bit of explanation for the benefit of those who are not familiar with this extraordinary piece for *Let's Make A Secret Marriage* is literally what its title suggests — a dramatized account of the devising and presentation of an opera for children. As such, it is somewhat aggressively over-the-top and self-explanatory, yet it is never obnoxious and, as at best — as presented in this particular Adelaide production directed by Kevin Mills and designed by Lyn Waters (both from the Adelaide College of the Arts and Education) — it can be a very effective consciousness-raiser not only for the young and uninitiated but for the not-so-young and not-so-understanding as well.

As played in Adelaide, the first two-thirds of the evening were very much in the here and now. It was in no way jarring to note — often almost subliminally — that typical Adelaide references were being utilized and there was always present, consistently submerged but never very far below the surface, that malice without want of spontaneity that characterizes the best of child performances and which British know how to exploit so adroitly.

There were a good many moments when the remarkably adept kids in the Adelaide part (I was the alienator, who were like presumably somebody thought another (at least even better) already forgot they were on stage and the whole thing became a slice of the real here and now in which a passing audience just happened to be present.

And of course that is just as it ought to be — particularly in such a piece, which has a certain amount of audience participation built in anywhere in the context the conductor of the night, Myer Friedman, also got into the act in the middle part, he spent a fair slice of his time

addressing — and sometimes lecturing — the audience from the podium rather than from the back of the stage, his intended to be performed by them during the opera itself.

Indeed, the *Let's Make* part of the evening was adroitly in just about every aspect — down even to the interesting demonstration of stage mechanics and lighting in the middle part of the evening. There are all too few opportunities for the ordinary theatre-going public to experience the making of stagecraft first hand (usually the name of the game is concealment of the tricks of the trade, rather than revelation in principle, every theatre-goer knows that the whole stage picture can be inverted green or purple at the flick of a switch that the walls of the stage between will roll away or fly away in a few moments with effortless ease, but actually seeing it happen has the magical fascination of any magically increased insight into the critical workings of the stage.

The major flaw in *Let's Make A Secret Marriage* is that the opera itself (which *The Little Sweep* tends to be an anticlimax after the less formal atmosphere built up in the first two-thirds of an evening. And because the first two parts were so effectively presented in Adelaide the final one was no doubt even less successful than it might have been elsewhere. This is of course more a criticism of the work than the production, for *The Little Sweep* is more suitable many years for a kid's performance than *Secret Marriage* is at all but lacks the vital ingredients of all opera — a libretto that allows scope for some so old new depth of

thought. We all know about the explosion of child libretto in the far-off days when chimney sweeps were a part of the here and now, and its basic plot effectively precluded sufficient spelling of the particular drama to make a very relevant to contemporary life.

Thus said, it should be re-emphasized that the Adelaide production was generally excellent, and featured the most impressive performance overall I have yet seen from Keith Hengsten. He was absolutely at home, pedagogically, early in the piece, and never faltered in presenting a credible portrayal of Black Bob and then the Coachman in the opera proper.

In its own way, *The Secret Marriage* of Camacho, which alternated in the season with the British piece was also a limited triumph since again, the stage spectacle that could be legitimately involved in the production was the direct corollary of the actual limitations of the work itself. The problem was decidedly different from that of *Let's Make A Secret Marriage*, though, for Camacho was an 18th-century British one, so put a more appropriately, but was not even the beginning of a pale shadow of its great contemporary, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

Much indeed, of the interest in a modern production of such a work as *The Secret Marriage* must rest on an unfortunate comparison to the organized opera part's eye with the misadventure of *Moscow*. Very often, the more experienced classical opera at its best, it can be as witty as *Moscow*, as broad as *Moscow* or *Vanda* as deftly constructed as any conceivable



State Opera's *Let's Make An Opera*

you'd care to nominate the final actual flow as a patchiness the fact that as brilliancies are evoked the suggest of gold among such a mosaic of silver and steel.

Without making ground, which would in itself not work such as *The Secret Marriage* of the natural artistic merit they possess by deterring they company, one is unable to justify the actual defects, if they are to be performed at all they must be performed most or less as originally conceived.

Given these inevitable problems, *State Opera's Secret Marriage* was very good, because as it did a very well balanced cast of Thomas Edwards, Philip Hemmings, John Wood, Geoffrey Armes, Ruth Gurney and Roger Howell, an excellent conducting staff from Ken Mooney and an equally excellent orchestra that live the part. Not to mention the brilliantly complicated involving set of Axel Burt which also served as the stage, as well as the excellent backdrop on the middle part of *Er's Adelaide Opera*.

The Secret Marriage is the kind of flawed work from the highly respected literature of the past that deserves the occasional revival for its inherent virtues...and *State Opera* deserves credit for having revived it so admirably in the current context.

The first ever visit of the much-revived D'Oyly Carte Opera Company to Australia was an immensely disappointing experience. It was marvellous to have them here, yet devastating that they were not up to the best of the indigenous Gilbert and Sullivan we have seen in Australia in recent years. The tendency, after first exposure, was to speak rather desperately for reasons to excuse their failings in terms of local standards to as somewhere to justify the astronomical costs inevitably involved in their long trip to Australia.

In terms of strictly topical G and S, the most D'Oyly Carte could offer in its first two Sydney efforts (HMMS *Phangler* and *The Mikado*) were as unconvincing as *Malcolm* to the effect that the

wasn't meant to be any, and a reference to handwriting to such colourfully stereotypical Asian motifs as Wootton Bassett and Katoomba. Not good enough, when old *Reckless*, and even the versatile Australian Opera staff, have been doing infinitely better for years.

There were undeniable pluses in the D'Oyly Carte visit. I have never heard G and S more beautifully performed, musically, than it was in the arena, nor have I seen more visually challenging design details, nor have I encountered more enjoyable exuberance or anything like that individual quality of the D'Oyly Carte character vigour.

Yet it all seemed, on first glance, to be terribly wrong with it. The 1974 Australian context that is increasingly alien to the traditional British underclass. The roughness provided by the war was the substance of richness that would reinforce the faith of a domestic rather than convert a casual acquaintance with the G and S genre into life-long friend.

At first contact, on opening night, the whole company seemed to be excessively self-willed and inward-looking — as if a war warning to be in the provinces as it and we Aussies might be thankful for seeing it on any terms. The attitude had clearly changed over by the Saturday matinee following the Sydney premiere of HMMS *Phangler* in particular, John Reed who had just about yanked his way through the role of Sir Joseph Pouter RCB, on opening night, was infinitely more committed — and, of course, funnier.

The superior personages *Phangler* act — with a nice complement of mal (really, nearly male) rigging in the foreground and a beautiful series backdrop of ships at anchor — drew a good band of applause in opening versions, particularly because it was complemented by an equally personable chorus of sailors. Apart from Reed most of the principals were very young — some might even claim so young, in particular of

Peter Leonard, who played Little Bantamfoot *Phangler* and *Katrina* in *The Mikado* a week later. And each day's early roles as *Katrina* by night demanded physical toughness even if padding is necessary to achieve it.

Melissa Reed was an excellent Ralph Bantamfoot with a nice tenor voice, even if it seemed very prominent on the top when pushed, and Peter Lyon came up with a pleasantly waxy Captain Corcoran even if acted a little too like key Vivian Tarnaby's *Katrina* was a trifle wooden in the strong department, but was beautiful to look at and to listen to. John Arthur's Dark Despatch started off a good deal more like a fairly badly built, complex with fairly good head, than the fairly-well-cut villain he ought to be, but developed quite nicely in the second act.

Overall, *The Mikado* was more successful on opening night and put a good deal better by the end of its first week. Reed's *Katrina* was much more interesting and fresh than his *Adelaide* had been in *Phangler*, Philip Pouter's Nanki-Poo was regularly surprised and astute, and very well sung indeed. Barbara Lilly's Yum Yum was nearly equal to G and S heroines but prone to be the main argument of someone seeking out of these roles is to look pretty and sing like an angel, and this she did perfectly.

Kenneth Sandford's Posh-Bath was a little lower key than we are used to in metropolitan productions, but nevertheless a highly professional comic turn. In delivery of his marvellous little speech about strong back his ancestry as a powdered proto-phobic globe was exemplary. And I have never before seen a better *Mikado* than John Ayblon, but one I even hope to see one the person who plays that particular role doesn't really have much of a go, but Ayblon made the most of it in all departments. He looked every inch a bloodthirsty emperor, spoke with the required degree of expressiveness and sang with a beautifully rich, deep-throated, bass tone. His rendition of "My Object All Sublime" was a total gem.

I cannot help thinking, finally, that the visit of D'Oyly Carte this year is ultimately alien to the visit of the Swanage Chamber Orchestra a few years back — whose *Mikado* offended me deeply the first time I heard it because it was so different to the *Mikado* I knew and loved. The point was that in a way they play *Mikado* in Swanage — and they have a long tradition of playing *Mikado*, just as everyone else does, and whom to say any way is better than them?

D'Oyly Carte's way of performing G and S has the most respectable credentials of all, of course. Which is not to claim that what it does is always right, merely to point out that as way has a special case for being taken note of, and must not be dismissed out of hand merely because it is so traditional and different from the way we are used to doing things on the other side of the globe.

*David Gyger is editor of *Opera Australia*.



Thomas Edwards (Pouter), Philip Hemmings (Yum Yum) and Ruth Gurney (Katrina) in 1974's *Secret Marriage*

COPPELIA — stunning sets and costumes

I always enjoyed the American Ballet's old production of *Coppelia* mainly because: it was always a production filled with life and high spirit and it was always extremely well danced. I was always disappointed by the fact that it didn't seem to exist in a recognizable world, either real or postulated, that there was no feeling of time or place and no sense of community.

Now with Peggy van Praagh's new *Coppelia* we have a work that exists in a real community (that being one somewhere in Eastern Europe, say Hungary or Rumania) but which seems at times to be extended choreography and formal invention. So much of the Saint Leon/Cadogan choreography has been limited under modernization and redesign, and what is new is flawed.

Perhaps memory makes the heart kinder but I don't think the new production is as well danced as well as the old one was either. Presumably though the ABT tradition may be in fading and nurturing new soloist culture takes, I don't think it being interfered by a lack of attention and concern for the corps de ballet.

So much of the corps work is busy and misdirected these days and not just in *Coppelia*, it was the same with *Fil-mat* *Quatre* last year. Obviously the corps is not getting the opportu-

nity and rehearsal that it needs and should be given. Visiting guest teachers may come and go and the results are mirrored in the corps work for a few programmes, but then things seem to go back to their usual comedy style. In work they could replace the current ballet masters and instructors with people that are more stringent in their demands and whom the corps de ballet will respect. As things are now, the corps is rightly in danger of becoming a stepchild.

Statically the ballet is beautiful though I do think Froedrichsen's design for Act I was a little too close to them for the ABT Masterminds for comfort or originality. Froedrichsen has designed the usually marvellous Act 3 as something that could only be described as Transylvanian Baroque and it conveys an air of excess and menace excellently. The design for the marvellous Act 3 which on one can ever seem to make any sense of including Balanchine's use of music and forces is one could wish, the same goes for the wonderfully conceived and designed costumes.

Coppelia was one of the last flowerings of high French Romanticism. After this and the Paris Commune that broke down just months after the ballet's premiere, things like this were no longer performed and ballets eventually then moved to the Russian and their important French

masters the brothers Petipa. As such, any production of *Coppelia* I feel, should mirror the dream of the original, over much dramatic tampering will upset the balance of sympathy within the work. This is what happened with Petipa's version and it is what has happened with Cadogan's production.

The sympathy here goes all for the pitiful, mistreated and presumptuous character of Dr Coppelia. Due to Cadogan's direction and the gripping narration that Ray Powell gave to *Coppelia*, the end of the second act when Swanilda's impersonation of the "perfect" doll Coppelia is exposed for the ruse it is and Dr Coppelia makes what a fast and self-deceiving man; he is, all the sympathy goes to him, slumped on the stage floor, staring into the void. He becomes a venerable old fool, miserably harassed and badly done by the town and village scoundrels of this little Rumanian town.

As a result, Act 3, where Dr Coppelia is nowhere to be seen, is even more and more unconvincing than ever, especially when some of the choreographic interpolations within the show are executed in a series of overtones.

The director and van Praagh have tried really to put more emphasis and purpose into it, transforming it into an almost pagan fertility ritual and mass marriage scene but still this ritual,



Josephine Joan Swanilda's, David Birch of Yvona and Joseph Petersen as Froed in *Coppelia* Act III Photo: Benicio Gains

and/or diversions, and covered, bare, festering about dawn's in the lean compass. We feel that we are watching the closing work of a triple bill programme rather than the summation of a full-length work. Still, one can't blame it all on the producers: it is in the nature of Coppola's construction to make this out the weaker, even the sole weakness of *Balanchine* couldn't save his version.

The money spent on the costumes for the Twelve Hours of Night must have been exorbitant judging from their loveliness, but the entry seemed only fair. The music and the choreography is so mixed that one can't remember a single detail after the finale. There are small compensations though: Lynette Allen dancing the Dance solo was wonderfully fluid and total, looking a lot happier than she had in the *Macmillan* pas de deux in the first programme; and also happier wearing what looked exceptionally like the actual costume.

One young girl, deserving of special praise is Joanne Maciel who danced the Prayer solo. She obviously has great potential and, though into this solo and her delicate handling, gentle shaping and soft, clear phrasing and forward reach her

realism of Prayer out of the highlights of Act 3.

Ann Jensen was perfect as far as it was concerned for the central role of Sweeney, right from her very first entrance until the final scene, her characterisation and method of attack complemented each other. There is and never has been very much light and shade with Sweeney, the quite simply has to be portrayed as a clever, quick-witted impostor who simply loves her selfish boyfriend Franz and who is convinced that he seems to give most of his attention to "that rather stiff looking newcomer" Coppola.

What was so appealing about Jensen's Sweeney is that it was obvious that her love for Franz along with her natural sexual cunning pulled her into impersonating the doll so as to lure Coppola away from him (and to stop Coppola's killing her as is to give the doll life). It became, then Act 3, a very weird allegory of role playing and multifarious questions. Yet, Coppola is convinced to see that he has successfully given the doll life, but Sweeney impersonates the doll as first and distinct from, but Franz is also in love with the doll for so he thinks. And when the charade is over, Coppola

wakes to his deception but Franz also "awakens" to his real flesh and blood sweet heart who is all dressed in the clothes of the doll.

Metaphysical problems like this aren't of course necessary to one's enjoyment of the work as a whole, but it is heartening to see that these issues have obviously been considered by Ophir and his cast. Most of the audience will love the dancing, both in the glories of the set and costumes and be thoroughly entertained and beguiled by the exquisitely detailed "toys" that so amazingly come to life but a short scene a dance that has not been exhaustively worked on as the experts of the balance of Acts 1 and 3.

Kelvin Coe was also at home in his role of Franz. There was not much in the way of dramatic sign or delivery of character for him to worry about and he could be left free to dance with that wide open style that is his trademark in the company. At the moment though, it seems that Mr Coe has a tendency to defer to the enable of his partners. They start clearly and finish crisply but they take half way through and the mechanism whatever it may be, loses focus at an inopportune because of a

David Birch is a little better in the past, he was quick and short in the choreographic demands and although not as technically proficient as Coe he didn't have that disturbing differential quality Christine Walsh as Sweeney unfortunately imitated behind Jensen in Act 1 she appeared not to require the presence of the doll at all so that the latter's plot with her means to evade Coppola, he didn't have any point or purpose other than the fact that they were all a flock of head-dirty birds looking for something to do. Her dancing left something to be desired too. Jensen is more technically able, this is obvious, but Walsh could have compensated by finding a different quality to elucidate in Sweeney.

The Bar of White scene was raped and confusing with her and Birch, whereas with Jensen and Coe one could see that it was part of an age-old ritual of projected or young manhood of your partner shakes an ear of wheat and you can hear the seeds, that means he loves you, if you can't hear them...! The Act 3 role's for Jensen and Walsh were shared too, the lines and songs that Jensen sang, Walsh wouldn't. But these were small symptomatic imbalances that are probably due to different interpretations for lack of them and not in the nature of the production as a whole — its problems and shortcomings are elsewhere.

As far as Act 2 is concerned, it was a breaching of the AB's in get Coppola to direct the production, but in terms of the overall structure and the truly balance of the three acts, I think they should have got someone who was more aware of the ballet's structure and of choreographic pacing in general. Still, a lot of people are going to love this new Coppola, and the AB can be assured of full houses, after all we shouldn't forget those screaming men and cowards



Ann Jensen (Sweeney) and Ray Powell (Dr. Coppola) in *Coppola* Act III. Photo: Bruno/Gala

The Queensland Ballet's Autumn Season

Saturday night brought me my initial experience with the Queensland Ballet. Having lived in Brisbane only two months, I looked forward to seeing the State Company. The company, consisting of thirteen full-time dancers, presented a full season with a varied programme, so varied that it gave the appearance of a lifestage. It contained a bit of everything, a Bourgeoisville of the 1830s (as though to a ballet recently choreographed by Artistic Director Harold Collin) sandwiched between two ballets that ran the spectrum of romanticism, comic and dramatic. Unlike a lifestage, the sum of the ballets did not make for a satisfying whole.

Not that dances must be similar or related, but instead, a programme should be consciously good and constructed with a sense of continuity. Presenting seven dances by seven very different choreographers gave the impression of a workshop production, if the programme were theatrical, it would help to solve the problem.

The evening began with August Bourgeoisville ballet, *Le Fantôme*. It is a Spanish faience piece in two scenes. The ballet has a folk dance flair and it must be performed with a precise light attitude. The dance can be exciting if danced very clearly and sharply. It was not the case Saturday night and the piece suffered accordingly. Though Gary Delverly had only a small role, he excelled the dance with a lightness and precision lacking from the remainder of the cast.

Clowns, choreographed by Don Asher is the type of contemporary work that suits the company very well. The dancers handled the dance with confidence and clarity. The ballet is infused with a sense of mystery, which proceeds through a cycle almost innocent in feeling. The dance is infused through conflicting relationships where the theme of manipulation is strong and persistent.

Enrico Macmillan's *Maître Corneille* is a humorous ballet that pleased the audience. It seems a bit dated and tells with its theme of three servants, later 1880, and their diabolical antics at the beach. The dancers treated the dance with a traditional approach which was quite heavy handed at times. It may have been the nature of the choreography, if so, they were successful.

The *Seven Lake* pas de trois was performed elegantly. It is a piece that contains moments when the dancers have an opportunity to display their virtuosity. A certain excitement was lacking, but nonetheless, the trio was precise and steady in their performance.

Jason Blach and Martin Raurack were guest artists from the Australian Ballet. Their stage security and strength in the *Spanish* pas de

deux projected a strong sense of professionalism.

Gems Out of Court with its average a two (there is a hilariously redundant) Choreographed by Peter Donell, the bulk of the ballet is the various escapades and relationships of a man and the two women in his life. The same roles place offer a tennis match, it is a totally predictable dance with an attempted passion and cheating thrown in for good measure. Donald Macleod handled the movement well, but his acting was overbearing and heavy. The two women, Jacqueline Ray and Dianne Storey danced the steps with steady accuracy.

Harold Collin's *Dance Space II* closed the programme. It is a planned movement ballet. At moments the dancers brought life to the different scenarios, which with its effective movement patterns make it an easy dance to watch. At times it lacked the freshness that seemed necessary and became laborious during those

moments.

In making a programme varied as it was, a company needs not only strong technical dancers, but dancers equally proficient in dramatic and comic abilities. At the same time, of the Queensland dancers had a lot short in all categories. It is a young company and the strengthening of their technique and acting capabilities will evolve with time. With a few more stage maturity, the company will be able to handle the varied works currently in its repertoire, at a more proficient level.

Thus a Harold Collin first full year as Artistic Director. In dance, time is often the measure between adequate quality and good quality. With positive direction, support, belief in the talent and the personality of the company and of course hard work, a company steadily will form. It is not difficult to conceive seeing that company evolve into a moving force in Queensland.



Dianne Storey & Donald Macleod in *Dance Space II*

Children's Theatre in America continued from page 15.

children in the audience? Or does my responsibility as a presenter of theatre include providing explanations of the way the world works, and not mere false promises?

THE EVERYMAN PLAYERS

New Orleans, La. *Pity (Shakespeare)*

Because this piece was produced by Chris Curry, long-time officer of children's theatre associations and former president on children's theatre, I expected something good. The Everyman Players described this collection of early Modern English nursery rhymes as "an absorbing collection of action, song and games" which "delightfully reminds the Everyman Players' tradition of noted burlesque." It was performed by a group of highly trained adults in pastel costumes of frilly ruffs, and tied so much to do with theatre as Shakespeare has to being playing. Would I wish to present this outrageous style of what is essentially intimate conversation between adults and children? Or to support the appropriate of children's own reasoning and learning given by simple minded adults? Is the Company aware of the danger laid often still used accusation of so many nursery rhymes? And all this from the idea, who besides quoting Richard Nixon is, and

"I believe theatre for children must begin with the inherent seriousness of life. Theatre for children demands drama of conflict as well as the moral conflict about something vital... The Cinderella Syndrome" is aptness.

This is the premiere philosophy that would protect children from the consequences of drama in action, that would intercede against hard-core truth, that would deny pain, the tragedy, the importance of life?

Or is there something in La di da Muffins and Humpty Dumpty that I have missed? Do I want children to think that theatre is all sugar and light? No.

THEATRE OF YOUTH COMPANY

Buffalo, NY. *Two-Fall tale*

What control as a presenter, should I exercise over the presentation of race stereotypes? How can I provide children with productions from other cultures without denigrating those cultures? At least there was one black actor in TOY — but what do children think of blacks when he plays a comical speaking gibberish in an otherwise all-white African folk tale? Or when they hear adults saying, "Ore, blacks are good imitations of monkeys?" What do they think of the Jewish race when an otherwise perfect American speaking, witman publicizes her constant hand wringing with "Oh yes" a lot? How can I believe TOY's stated objective? We are concerned with developing people through drama? When a promiscuous race, sex and age stereotyping? Or are we not understanding how much theatrical effect is there in a cardboard

man stuck on a boomstick in a bucket, simply turned around when it is time to despair? Would I want children to think that the theatre has no any staining stage? No.

THEATRE 5

Ottawa, Canada.

Am I wanting to present a notion that late maturing but thick costumes and foot adults trying to be youngsters are the ingredients of good theatre, especially if accompanied by a direct moral message? That hard work is its own reward notwithstanding? unemployable? That women should stay home to raise dutiful domesticated daughters even if they are single mothers' deserted wives? If the performance as an Theatre 5 brochure claims, "would class theatre"...then there's little hope for theatre as art. Do I want to present a theatre company for children which is proud of its connection by the United Church for an undescribed documentary, played in churches all over Canada — or should this kind of work be left alone to some "church-in-education team"? I do think that Hans Christian Andersen's *mermaid*, *Father Time* presented as a story *Tail of magic, romance, fantasy and wickedness* is a notable contribution to International Year of the Child in my theatre? Or do children deserve a little basic truthfulness, a little explanation of why it was even necessary to have an international Year of the Child in the first place? Would the society underestimate the worth of children seeking good theatre? No.

THE TRUCE, INC.

Winnetka, Illinois.

What is the value in presenting to children as funny concepts from Shakespeare? Will it not then appear for none, or make Shakespeare seem like a living comic book? Does *twelfth night* Shakespeare reflect primary concern with "art", with "theatre"? Do I want children to think that Shakespeare, no matter how well performed, simply down, character sketches good for a laugh? No.

IMAGINARY THEATRE COMPANY

St. Louis, Mo. *A collaboration of*

This production, for primary school high school audiences, attempted to use a variety of themes and dramatic actions to show how ideas can be turned out. But unfortunately the ideas were based and trivial. What would "not travel" or "not hand" ideas be in this context? Has the company a bit of presenting tough or complex ideas to teenagers? Is "irrational" simply a short cut to trying to control with an audience's eye of the world, because people have a mistaken idea that they cannot be both serious and entertaining in the theatre? Does this mean that the company, despite its proclamation to the contrary, is playing the same role as commercially controlled television, make them all think they are thinking and then they won't,

Snap To It

and then they'll be proven about the focus that determine their lives? Do I want future generations to get away with that kind of response to life? No.

METRO THEATRE CIRQUE

St. Louis, Mo.

Arm in Arm

The purpose of this highly talented ensemble "is to provide a live creative theatre experience for young people and to stimulate interest and participation in the creative arts." However, the techniques alone do matter how good are not enough. Without some sort of cohesion in a possible that we are showing children that an "experience" is empty without careful explanation of it, the seriousness of rationalism and integration in the world from which the idea stemmed. Is "art for art's sake" still a survival philosophy in theatre for children? If so, why, when it has long been discarded as a cult theory?

SOUTHERN EDUCATIONAL THEATRE

Pratt, Mo.

Remains

Apart from the expensive publicity (a moment of theatre as doctored, as spell binding, and it will find the most lively production in Broadway?), I think SET is the only company besides Stage One that I would consider — and for entirely different reasons. Remains is a remarkable show, and coming as it does from the "cheap world" is quite remarkable as a combination of theatrical vulgarity and attempt to make a few serious points. When it says to children, a that theatre can be vulgar, raucous and a suspense drama actually it gives children some idea that there is a range of theatrical experience, and may possibly help towards explaining to children that as adults, we choose from a large range of theatre experience for our own satisfaction. Clearly wouldn't control any deeply moral things, but it certainly can show young people to the intellectual and moral professions as sugar-coated in productions presented at, for example, the Showcase. There were two aspects of SET's programme which would seem to make a buying decision about outlined above. One is the formidable talent of Ronin Fournier as a comic — affecting in his seriousness and his vulnerability, and the other is the use of a kind of Festival of Light character form of the few well finished-out characterizations in the whole Showcase, for the expressed clarity of the attributes of a representative commitment, but with an explained sympathy and caring open beyond any of the stereotyping in other Showcase productions. There is a liberating aspect of theatre in this production precisely because of this attention to detail and context. Would I put this production on with attention money in school term? Probably, because the staff was supported by an intention to introduce young people to the joy of theatre, and to pay attention to issues from every day life.

Writing this piece has been useful, because

Continued on page 49



Professionalism and the Vocal Ensemble

Becoming truly professional is very hard for a small vocal ensemble, and it is not even certain that the enormous effort involved is wholly worthwhile. Most vocal ensembles, or concertos as they are often called, begin life with programmes of Italian and English madrigals, French chansons, German part songs, Spanish villanetas and so on. They shuffle on stage in a half-hearted fashion, look mildly surprised and sometimes even a little pleased if there is a vocalianne upstage and generally behave with a marked lack of showmanship, not to mention the ordinary grace of concert musicians. If they are a truly musical group they will still attract noisy audiences, who may even regard their relative professionalism as a sign of integrity. At the stage they will probably make a recording like the disc recently produced by Cherry Pie of the Laraine Corson (of Sydney) under the title of *The Laraine Corson's Salomean Collection*. This will have a decent average standard of vocal performance quite attractive in its way but hopefully uncompetitive when compared with the standard reached by the more experienced ensembles. To perform a popular Australian madrigal in a plausible manner is, with all the good will in the world, not really a contribution to the world of professionalism.

If an ensemble goes further than this, moving and entering its performance, exhibiting weaknesses of voice or attack and cultivating the variety of long phrases, the ensemble will probably become known beyond the madrigalchamber circle. It may be asked, as the King's Singers were once asked, to try an honest vocal duelling for light or even pop recordings and television sessions. It will begin to ruble the awareness of experienced stage and studio performers and will develop up its stage manners and dress and venture on some light relief in its programming. The King's Singers started with straightforward part song arrangements of light, popular and folk songs in natural voice with no real or modest theatricality or to claim to be the audience with an unexpected success. They have extended this principle backwards through the second half of the programme, as can be heard on the two



discs issued by EMI of their much unnecessary vocal as the Royal Festival Hall in London.

Recent one-EMI EMI CDs of the kind of music — Renaissance part songs and interesting 18th century pieces — with which they would once have made up a complete programme. Recent two-EMI EMI CDs entirely consists of folk, pop and novelty songs, arranged by some of the group's regular collaborators in an initial and sometimes positively dazzling manner. Another recent Kings Singers disc brings together one side of songs by Flinders and Simon and another one of songs by Noel Coward. This is whimsical, very well edited, singing, light but not alien to the clever and subtle style for the group has established for itself in the course of its steadily increasing professionalism. On a new disc entitled *Tempest Flight* (EMI) 1986 the King's Singers push the way into modern professionalism with multitracked recording effects and instrumental backing. Songs by Laraine and McCormack, David Byrne, Simon of Simon and Garfunkel and Bob Dylan, among others, bring out the set concept of the group in female versions of the instrumental American records that seem to be required equipment for almost every singer entering the pop field.

In this disc and in other recent records the King's Singers also show to have become fully professional in skill, manner and general performing attitudes, but the danger is that their performances on the stage will come increasingly to seem simply a bag of tricks and clever novelty act they do. They will then have to decide whether to go on the discards crafted out by Ward Swingle's *Swingle 11*, who made all their recordings, including their recordings of Renaissance and more recent part songs, with multi-channel audio techniques and actually copied these characteristics in the concert hall through the use of individual handheld microphones. I find Swingle 11's kind of professionalism more threatening, involving as it does a certain amount of stage movement in appropriate songs and the use of some stage instruments, and ultimately more convincing. It is true that Swingle 11's sound is quite different from that of the traditional live performance of a vocal ensemble. Once this is accepted, however, the superb quality of the group's musicianship and the complex effect of their performances, which seem to me essentially more serious in the best sense of that term, combined to make these recent Opera House vocal discs eminently and, except for the distractions of television crises, very satisfying.

The King's Singers have not included their original source of inspiration in their recent recordings, and their so-called *Contemporary Collection* (HMV) 1985 is a curiously taken up with German part songs of the late Renaissance and early baroque periods and with Spanish part songs covering the period between 1400 to 1600 and 1600. They are charming and amusingly sparkling in the German songs, if a little fireworks in their handling of the languages, but the Spanish pieces on the other side of the record find them far the most part woefully lacking in proficiency of tone and fiery attack. This is a very mild, subtle singing, the singing of a group which seems to have settled for the role of agreeable entertainer rather than of truly searching musical interpreter.

Continued from page 14
in actual interpretation. The MRPG themselves are reluctant to view it simply as an edited, if spectacular, event.

To them a spokesman rather a further step in their long-term ambition of creating a genuine community involvement with live theatre. The circus remains the process begun with their first show, *A Big Hand for the Little*, a process aimed at overcoming the

slowly deterioration and decline which affects much of contemporary theatre in a technologically saturated world. The label of community is becoming almost anoxic with these companies. All too often it is a meaningless title, a mask for spurious socialism. The MRPG are at least making genuine efforts to give the concept some meaning. That their circus managed to attract over eight percent of the population of Albany

Woolongah is less than a week must be a promising point. But the challenge will be to consolidate this success, to harness that enthusiasm permanently and cost similar audiences in other types of theatrical performance. For the MRPG, as for Circus House, it cannot be all bread and circuses. A new theatre company working in the Australian country-side will find it difficult enough task to maintain a supply of bread.

Anti-illusionism, Meyerhold and Piscator



The Theatre of Meyerhold by Edward Braun (Melburn, pp \$15.95)

The Theatre of Erwin Piscator, by John Wilton (Melburn, pp \$15.95)

Here are two of the most important and the most interesting theatre books to be published in this country in the last few years. This is a time when increasingly the clarity of good theories is being obscured: it is a time when the debate between the advocates of Aristotelian naturalism and its detractors is becoming more baroque and convoluted. Cuts are being made for writers who can write about the theatre rather than words for the page. There is a growing interest in Brecht and in the philosophy in the work of directors such as Grotowski. And there is a new sophistication creeping into the discussion of the old simple division between Proust and naturalism and Chekhov and the *Austro-Hungarian National Character*. It is appropriate that accounts of the work of two of the greatest anti-illusionistic directors of the century should appear now to inspire people and to balance the widely familiar work of Stanislavsky and the Americans.

The scope of Meyerhold and Piscator's work, even simply in terms of resources, is breathtaking. With casts of up to 100, orchestras, complex settings with multiple levels, his studios, his multiple film and slide projection and other cinematic scenes, musical and literary references, they were able to explore the technology of the theatre and move beyond illusive naturalistic scenery to make the setting part of the dramatic itself. Even as today's financially more restricted theatre the possibilities of complex scenery boards, large

and holographic would have seemed then inconceivable.

The interest in technology and theatricality was for both directors to serve their aims for theatre in society. Piscator wanted to bring politics into the theatre and use it as a tool for the Marxist analysis of contemporary events — the new relations of industrial processes and class conflicts, which the old naturalistic theatre was content to treat. If Brecht was the theorist of the Epic theatre then Piscator as Brecht himself acknowledged, was its major builder.

Meyerhold's political aims were less specific although along the same lines. He was the first great Soviet director but his early interest in symbolism and constructivism increasingly alienated him from the theatrical and political establishment which was eventually to set up Stanislavsky as the official theatrical form. His ideas on many different periods and styles including the comedies of style and the medieval Chinese desire to develop a theatre of grotesquery and tragic comedy which would confront his audience with the criminals and the contradictory in life, and put them out of the complacent consciousness they got from surface conventions. He has only seen his work suffered from actors who automatically fell back on the old tricks of the realistic theatre. A dedicated communist, who was one of the first Russian artists to declare himself for the Revolution in 1917, he was eventually in a position to put his own Statue and train his actors (in 'mechanical' as work in his way. By then, however, he was falling foul of the authorities who began to find ideological faults in his work. So one of the great visual experiments of theatre as a means of agitation and propaganda came to be rejected of Meyerhold — a performance word which implied that he was preoccupied with form to the exclusion of the political message for which cause to include any theatricality which did not conform with the accepted standard of socialist realism.

These studies are both excellent in their different ways. Edward Braun's, on Meyerhold, is a detailed, comprehensive serious study of a coherent body of work. John Wilton's more brochure framed style suited well what Meyerhold might have called "necessary truths" as a man moved to the confused and rambling career of Piscator, whose work related political problems in the Weimar Republic, bourgeoisie Germany in USSR to the NK, and during the directing the *Dramatic Workshop* in New York after the war, and the discovery of the talents of Hochstadt, Kipphardt and Weiss in West Germany in the 60s. Wilton vividly evokes a world which could make all



these disparate activities possible in one vision.

A great theatre in both these books is the impact on the theatre and its artists of Stalin in the late 30s. If the Revolution and the Civil War created legends for early Soviet theatre to explore, then Stalin in the 30s created daily more, of a totally different kind. Piscator fled Nazi Germany to work in Russia, a devastated state which many German artists were also in the early 30s. It was largely luck when, on a visit to Paris in 1936, he received a telegram from a trapped colleague which read simply "Work abroad!" — "Don't leave."

Meyerhold was not so lucky. A more powerful theatrical legend could be made from his experiences after his theatre was liquidated in 1928. In the weeks following, while many friends stayed away from him out of fear, he had three unwelcome visitors. They were Pasternak, who hardly knew him personally, Brecht, who had a lot to lose himself (but who managed to hide Meyerhold's papers in the walls of his own house, and Stanislavsky, one of his main theatrical opponents, who nevertheless to everyone's surprise offered him a position directing at the Opera Theatre. Stanislavsky died on 7 August 1938. Meyerhold was arrested on 26 June 1938 and shot in a Moscow prison on 2 February 1940. He had wanted his audience to "question the values that ordain the existing order."

As Edward Braun concludes, "Given the climate of fear, ideological, false optimism and hypocrisy that prevailed in the Soviet Union after the 1930s, Meyerhold's fate can now be seen as inevitable and the morality of the crime against him becomes a grim testimony to his great power as an artist."

CULTURE

A.C.T.

AND ARTS CENTRE 48 4707

Assassination Threat in Westwood
The Flaming World by John Rosemond
 Director: Warwick Barker
 4.7.11-14 July

CANBERRA THEATRE 48 7800

Lullabies Open
The Monkeys of Figma by Mogens Dedejns
 International Hardy Conductors: Donald Holder
 4.6-7 July
An Evening with David Kennedy
 8 July

PLAYHOUSE 48 7800

Foreign Theatre
Grave Fictions by Aaron Clackson: Director, Pam Rosenberg 10-21 July, except Sundays
Kolditz Dance Company 12-14 July

BIRD HOUSE THEATRE WORKSHOP

47 0781
Bajan Company
Nature's Noise
The Empty Mouse

A programme without walls (as per art club)
 Schools in the ACT

THEATRE 347 4212

California Repertory
A Menial of French by David Williamson
 Director: Rodney Fisher 5-14 July, Thursday to Saturday

The Removable Air of Arturo Ui by Bertolt Brecht: Director: Ralph Wilson 23 July to 31 August: Wednesday to Saturday

For entries, please contact Margaret Wells on 47 9782.

NEW SOUTH WALES

ACT 1085 COMPANY 961 2381

Programme unconfirmed

ARTS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES

487 6611

School Years: Black's Art a children's play for adults and primary: Metropolitan area through July

Modern Music Theatre for infants, primary and secondary: Central and Outer West: one July
Symphony: a contemporary musical for infants, primary and secondary: Riverina area through July

Gale Windward gone: popper for infants and primary: North Coast and Hunter areas: one July 27

The Banquet world of maps for infants and primary: North West and Hunter areas through July

Junior Concert: Lad Folk dance for infants, primary and secondary: South Coast through July

White Air: Ash Bush devised by and starring Loretta Tree in Henry Lawson: Newcastle and Far West areas from July 27: Adult tour

After World: folkinger Central West and Metropolitan areas: from July 9: Adult tour

COURTHOUSE HOTEL 488 8202

Oxford Street, Taylor Square
Glades Gave Down / *Under* by Ruth Mason and Malcolm Frawley, director: Malcolm Frawley

notes, Sandra Ridgwell

ENSHURE THEATRE 609 0070

How Sleep the Brave by Philip Mann: director, Gary Bower, with Steve Brown, Alex Collier, Gary Daniels, Patrick Dwyer, John Higgins, Tony Martin, Michael Ross and Cain Taylor 10-14 July
Chapter Two by Neil Simon: Director: Haydn Gordon: Commences 19 July

FRANK STRAIN'S BULL n BUSH

THEATRE RESTAURANT 417 4677
Ready for the Moment A musical review from the turn of the century to today with Noel Bragley, Barbara Wynless: Director, George Lander: Through July

GENESIA THEATRE 417 4112

The Case Records by William Somerset: director: Alan Parry: Through July

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE 412 3411

Anne Immaculate director, George Martin with Hayes Gordon, Jill Perreman, Nancy Hayes, Rex Henson, Anne Gagg and Kevin Johns: Through July

HUNTER VALLEY THEATRE COMPANY

449 2173
Civic Playhouse, Newcastle

Cabaret - return season: Director, Ross McGregor: choreography: Christine Kuhn: musical director: Alan McEadden: Vocal: Jennifer McGregor, Robin Hurns, Valerie Butler, Linda Cooper

JANE STREET THEATRE 461 9950

On Our Selection by Sarah Reid: until July 12
Wayway for Good by Samuel Beckett: commences July 15: Both productions directed by George Whaley with Sonya Blake, Mel Gibson, Sally Cahill, John Clayton, Don Crosby, Vivian Garrett, Nina Hatzidimitriou, Peter Menzies, Barry Otto, Geoffrey Rush, John Singleton and Kerry Walker

KIRIBILLI PLUS THEATRE 462 1415

Kumbili Hand Wilson's Point
The Vampyre Shaw: written and directed by Perry Quanton: Saturdays through July

LESSER BEE PRESENTATIONS 459 9616

Mike Jackson traditional bush music, Touring: *White* primary and secondary schools in Sydney: Metropolitan area: Through July

MARIAN STREET THEATRE 468 3164

Fables, musical, director: Alanine Duncan with Ray de Paz, Gordon McEagill, Ronale Fletcher, Peter Laurens, Barbara Farrell, Anne Polunin and Patsy Lloyd: Until July 7
The Chapman by Philip Mann: Director: Peter Winkler: Commences July 11

MUSIC HALL THEATRE RESTAURANT

469 8123

Love to the Devil written and directed by Stanley Webb: with Rex Haddock, Alan Wilson and Kevin Johnson: Through July

MUSE LOFT THEATRE 477 1661

On Together written by Hilary Bamberger: at director: William Orr: with Len Young and Ann Freary: Through July

NEW THEATRE 459 1416

From White Gaudy: *the Before* Gun by McEagill: Director: Wayne van Hoolst: Through July

NIMROD THEATRE 469 5800

The Job of Goldie by Benoit Brecht, director, Ken Hunter: with Les Armstrong, Alan Baker, Susan Campbell, Arthur Diggins, Rita Crowley, Drew Forsythe, John Gordon, Julie Harrison, Graham Jones, Pam Orchard, Ruth Stone, Ian Stoddard, Mervyn Vaughan and Paul Winkler: Until July 19

PLAYERS THEATRE COMPANY 463 3211

Birds Prey on Theatre
Leader in Revue by Edward Percy and Raymond Dwyer: director, James Harrop: Through July

THE PLAYHOUSE 469 6344

Evening programme unconfirmed
Deluge along: along: children's musical by Roger Warner with old plays: directed by John Howell: Friday, Saturday and Sunday: through July

O THEATRE 461 2171

The Department by David Williamson: at Parramatta: until July 18

REGENT THEATRE 468 5803

Stars of World War II until July 7
The Two Women with Renee Corbett and Kenneth Baker: from June 18

RIVERINA TRUCKING COMPANY

A Tour in Merle by Jack Hibberd, at Wagga: Director: Doreen Jamieson: director: Stephen Aron: 23 June 7 July

ROCKS PLAYERS 458 638/638 3431

133 Water Road Globe
The Removable Air of Arturo Ui by Bertolt Brecht: director: Anthony Byles: Commences July 17

SEWELL CENTRE 460 6515

York Theatre
An Evening with David Kennedy July 18 to 21

SHOFPONT THEATRE FOR YOUNG

PEOPLE CO-OP 461 9940

Five workshops for young people after school and on weekends in playbuilding, puppets, mime, dance, video, music and design: A.C.T. 98 scheme operates throughout the week for unemployed people

The Warehouse Theatre: Touring Company presently touring schools with *The Playgroup Play* for High Schools
The Quest for the Pigeon for Primary Schools

BREAKFAST THEATRE RESTAURANT

461 1443

Lovely Night by & by Doug Edwards, director: Ben Feldman with Kate Farnham: Through July

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY 469 8122

Diana Theatre: The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Bertolt Brecht: director: John Clark, with Peter Carroll, Elana Hadwin, Steven Raley, Ken Campbell, Jennifer Hagan, Alan Todd, Maggie Blaney, Jon Young, John McEwen and Mervyn Drake: 4 commences 4 July

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE 48180

Opera Theatre: The Australian Opera in The Abolition from the *Abolition* by Mozart, conductor: Richard Bonington: producer: George Cipriani. Admission by Mozart: conductor, Richard Bonington: producer, Babu Loring and *The Glorious* by Tchaikovsky

conductor, Richard Borgego, producer, Regina Rasmich. In repertory throughout July.

NEW THEATRE OF THE DRAP (017 1200)

My House is Your Garbage Bin for primary schools.

Artemis Speed Reader tells Words for secondary schools. Director: Ian Watson, with Nola Collins, Margaret Davis, David London, Colin Allen and Bryan Davis. On tour throughout the metropolitan area.

THEATRE ROYAL (014 4111)

Trilogy by Bernard Shaw director, Peter Williams, with Robby Lamb, Diana Davidson, Helen Sarge, Jacqueline Kent, Julianne Westbrook, Tara Burdison and Anne Seaton. Throughout July.

MAGNAGLIVE THEATRE (069 2-6219)

Cardinal Opera
The Marriage of Figaro by Mozart. Director, Sebastian Hardy, Conductor, David Holian. 13-14 July.

For further contact: Carole Long on 037 1206

QUEENSLAND

BRISBANE ARTS THEATRE (06 2344)

A Year For All Seasons by Robert Bolt, Director, designer, Ian Thomson, with John Gyle, Jack Brown, Ian Greshy, Gary Telfers. July-October-November 14 June-28 July.

LA BOTTE (06 1629)

The Wolf Family Show Directed by the Australian Performing Group, director, Richard Fookesingham. 12 July-28 Aug.

QUEENSLAND ARTS COUNCIL (011 3980)

Overlandland Ballet Company touring with *The Messenger* until 14 July.
Mambo Gumbo Argentinians Dance Group tour. To 1 Sept.

QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY

(011 5875)
A Breacher Named David by Tessaiah Williams director, Rick Blomfield, designer, Peter Cooke. 11 July-4 Aug.

TWELFTH NIGHT THEATRE (02 9848)

UN Company
Presented by Tom Sheppard, director, John Milnes designer, Mike Bridges. To 7 July.
The Sky-Magaly Show by Alan Bean and
The Lee Darry Show by Jack Hiltner. Director, John Milnes. 12-18 July.

For further contact: Glen Barchelor on 264 3845

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

STATE OPERA

The Opera Theatre
The Clerk of Love by Donizetti. Director, Colin George, Designer, Hugh Collins. 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21 July.

STAGE COMPANY

The Bakery Theatre
Sonata of Silence by Eric Ross. Director, John Noble. 22 July-12 Aug. With Sam.

THEATRE

The Red-Head, Car Aragon and Cuckoo's Nest
Blue Queen by Dennis Clarke. Director, John McFarlane. 15 July-3 Aug. With Sam.

THEATRE CHILD

Lark Theatre, Adelaide Uni Campus
The Birthday Party by Harold Pinter. Director, Graham Melick. 18 July-4 Aug. With Sam.

Q THEATRE (01 5713)

69 Halifax Street
Chrysothemus book & lyrics by Neville

Phillips and Robin Chancellor. Music by Rob Smeaton. 7 July-4 Aug. With Sam.

THEATRE EXCHANGE

Physicists. Hardley CAC, Magill
Any Love by William Shakespeare
9-14 July, 18-21 July.

AUSTRALIAN DANCE THEATRE

(012 3994)
South Australian Country Tour. 11-18 July. Port Lincoln, Whyalla, Broken Hill, Loxton, Millicent. 19-24 October.

For further contact: Elaine Joy on 222 8832

TASMANIA

POLYGON THEATRE (03 6878)

The Fantasticks. Director, Donald Gray. Touring to 8 Hobart 6 July, Clarendon 7 July.

TASMANIAN PUPPET THEATRE (03 7996)

Touring 6 and 7 August, 1-13 July.
Kubrick in the Warehouse Theatre. 16-18 July.

THEATRE ROYAL (04 6284)

Arms and the Men by George Bernard Shaw. SATC. Director, Nick English. 1-7 July.
David Copperfield. 13, 14 July.
George and Mildred. 17-19 July.

For further contact: the editorial office on 0490 514770

VICTORIA

ACTORS THEATRE (039 1630)

New Adventures of Paddington Bear Serenades.

ALAN HUGH THEATRE (041 2028)

Australian Dance Theatre Series. Programmes 23 July 10-11 and 2 pm.
1990 presented by The Menzies Players.
11-14 July, 19-24 July. 8-10 pm. student concession available.

ARENA THEATRE (06 9647 or 36 1937)

Musicians of Bremen. Company One.
Touring primary schools. Preps to grade 3.
Hercules and the Golden Apple. Company One.
Touring primary schools. Grades 4-5.
Staged by Edward Albee. Company One.
Designed and Directed by Peter Tulloch.
Touring Upper Secondary Schools.
My Wife Would Say: Yes or No based on ideas of Bertolt Brecht. Directed, designed and directed by Peter Charlton. Touring lower secondary schools.

Women by Brian Friel. Company Two.
Designed and directed by Peter Tulloch.
Touring upper secondary schools.

Paul Palmer and his Wife against the Elements by Eric Gorr. Company Two.
Designed and directed by Peter Charlton.
Touring lower secondary schools.

Toulou's Quest by Stephen Wilton. SCAT.
Institute Artists Theatre.

ARENA THEATRE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Youth Theatre Group 7-9 (10-10 pm) Mondays.
Women's Theatre Group 7-9 (10-10 pm) Tuesdays.

Saturday Morning classes 9-10 (10-10 pm) — 5-10 yrs old.
Saturday Morning classes 11-12 (10-10 pm) — 11-15 yrs old.

HSK Poetry Show 21 June July.

ARTS-COUNCIL OF VICTORIA (039 4333)

Sonata. Touring with Wayne Robert Brown. Country Tour.
Australian Dance Theatre Country Tour.

AUSTRALIAN PERFORMING GROUP

(0844 FACTORY 11047 7123)

From Theatre *The Woman* by Edward Bond. 19 July-26 Aug.
Back Theatre *Remembrance* by Brecht. 5 July-11 Aug.

COMEDY THEATRE (064 4999)

Donkey by Ian Lewis. Director, Michael Balderson, with Denis O'Brien, Robyn Nixon. John Howard.

CREATIVE ARTS THEATRE (073 4658)

Who What When and Where. Roundel creating drama.
Australia! That's Where People Dared On Their Heads.
Take the Ink out of Work. Touring in Tertiary Institutions.

CLAY NINETEENTH CENTURY HALL GEELONG

Fridays and Saturdays only.

HOOPA THEATRE FOUNDATION

(031 7403)
Theaterman.
After Julia by Sarah Lewis. director, Roger Pugh.

Sixty-two Years Ago by Arthur Fogel.

Opening 24 July.
Upstart Theatre.

Arrival *Arrival* *Arrival* *Los Angeles* by Roger Pugh, director. Melbourne. Melbourne.
The Immortal by Huckleberry Williams.
Opening 11 July.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE (042 3211)

Second Case starring Ray Lawrence.

LASE LAUGH THEATRE RESTAURANT

(0419 8234)
The Circus Show. Circus Art presents the Great Case All Tails Set.

LA MAMA (039 4593, 367 4883)

The Play that Told You directed and performed by Robert Melton, Jerry Kemp, Elizabeth Drake. 24 July.
Time and Space directed and produced by Judy Raphael and Roy Goldson. 12-15 July.

In the Salubrious of your Pleasure written and directed by Michael Paine. 12-15 July.
Amphibious *Amphibious* written and directed by Graham Henderson. A Santa Productions. 15-20 July.

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY

(0416 6000)
Bund/St Theatre.
The Club by David Williamson. director, Simon Chiles, designer, Stuart Wilson. To 14 July.
David Jones's Great Big Adventure Book for Kids by Rob George. director, Bruce Myles. To 12 Sept.

Admission Theatre
Under the Skin by Alison Clark. director, Bruce Myles. designer, Tanya McCulloch. To 4 Aug.

PALA & THEATRE (041 8631)

Programme of Excerpts by the Australian Ballet. 2, 3, 4, 5 July.
John McLaughlin and The One Track Road. 7 July.

PILGRIM PUPPET THEATRE (018 6606)

Peter Pan by James Barrie adapted by Graham Bosc. Mon-Fri. 10-10 pm and 2 pm.
Sat 2 pm only.

POLYGLUT PUPPETS (018 1513)

Multi-cultural puppet theatre with Murgie the Cat and Friends. Touring schools and community centres.

PRINCESS THEATRE (042 2811)

La Clemenza di Tito Mozart. Conducted by Richard Small. producer, Anthony Birch. 1980

Guide

THEATRE AND JOINTS THEATRE LOUNGE

6621 1354
With Tilda and John Newman. Myrtle Roberts.
Vic Gordon, and guest artists.

VICTORIAN STATE OPERA H 5061

Geelong and Phe Miskin From 3 July
Travis Upon a Star School Company
Graham's story was adapted by Peter Harrison.
Costumes by Maure Metcalf sets by Henry Smith.

Major Amateur Companies

(Phone contact these theatres in the evening for
further details)

BASIN THEATRE GROUP 762 0682
CLAYTON THEATRE GROUP 678 9782
HEIDELBERG REP 45 2786
MALVERN THEATRE COMPANY 261 8000
PUNDPIN THEATRE 43 8107
WILLIAMSTOWN LITTLE THEATRE 528 4267
766 8624

1912 THEATRE

For entries contact Les Cartwright on 261 1777

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

ROLE IN THE WALL LOSS 2000

The Fisher Girl by John Webster. Director
Ray Ormrod. From 5 July

NATIONAL THEATRE COMPANY

(025 2500)

Placidus
Drive Sevens by Chelton. Director, Stephen
Barny. Collier and Sullivan Society. Backstage
Producer Ray Ormrod conductor Peter Bailey.
Design Graham Macken. 25 June 14 July
Chris Langham. Superson 17 18 July
Siddhish At Home by Frances Durbridge
Director Edgar Mead. From 26 July

THE REGAL (081 1571)

A Night with John Savage. With Barry
Humphreys. 6-13 July

WA ARTS COUNCIL BOOKING PRO GRAMME

WA Ballet Company. Kof On tour to Eastern
Goldfields

Local Artists. Paperwork
National Theatre. Phil Shaw. with Joan Sydney
and Maureen Ogden

National Theatre. Till
Kasper. Jack and the Beanstalk. Writers and
directed by Richard Tulkish

WA Ballet Company (025 2500)

Concert Hall. Kof based on a libretto by
Elizabeth Blackmore music Victoria Williams
chorography. Conch Wicks. Premiere Season.
30 June 7 July

For venues contact Joan Humphreys on 269 6649



THIS IS A PRIZE CROSSWORD NO. 1

Name

Address

Send to: The Editor, Theatre Australia, 100 Pitt Street, Sydney, N.S.W. 2000

Across:

1. Banned 11 (4)
2. This classical patch may give out a spasm (6)
3. 100m is a long distance (6)
4. Play for one to keep things (6)
5. It is an unendingly unpleasant sight in 1 (2)
6. It is as he hoped that 5 is this (4)
7. Emma's diary will contain nothing of the church (12)
8. Handwriting of one might be 11 (12)
9. Misconception that it is a child's condition (8)
10. Transfer but it is the last (12)
11. Clubs off cover for seven number points (6)
12. Current that you must fix in advance (4)
13. Rape as usually, then someone (6)
14. Examined several directions in time (6)

Down:

1. With accuracy in sight, add logging (6)
2. Enclosed down to cut the margins (6)
3. Asian word? (6) says on a European
map (12)
4. About a race on the organ — except for the
performer (12)
5. Items of which are expensive picture prints
in writing (6)
6. Food the academic and the journalist, and
it's appeared (6)
7. "Vulgar" — by language has — involves
persons of all? (12) (12)
8. Heron's precise person? (6)
9. Let us establish, say, the use of a vehicle (6)
10. King Edward's original playwright in
producing scenes (6)
11. Springing rock engulfs a hundred family
members (6)
12. Could be participants on (12)
13. Calculate to the finish and get a favour you
started with (6)
14. Guide the us (12)



The first correct ones
drawn on July 15th are
shown on next year's
subscriptors to T&A

Last month's answers:

The winner of the
month's Crossword was
Ms M V. Maden, c/o
Stratton Park, W.A.

Continued from page 12

spectrum which includes a programme designed
to develop language skills for the children with
non-English speaking backgrounds and an
advanced story especially for slow-learning
children.

West Australia

West Australia's National Theatre T&A
Team intentionally presents plays that will
expand a child's understanding and awareness.
Interestingly they also produced two
contemporary plays about education in the
Greenroom at the Playhouse in 1993. Canada
about two teachers and a school teacher and
Gem and Gem written for a teachers
conference, about the real and imagined worlds
of a disabled child.

Northern Territory

The Northern Territory has an on-going
Education Department Drama Advisor who is
himself an actor/director, and since T&A-
performance from the Community Group at
Browns Mission. There must be possibly
the most difficult State to work as, but with their
close, well-growing special attention to atypical
post primary into education & performing arts
services. (Awards existing etc)

One has then throughout Australia the T&A
meets at first reading and at some places also
working with the schools and thus broadening
their children's theatrical experience in the
area these means are offshoots from the major
state companies. One has also some extremely
professional teams that are purely educationally
oriented and these seem to be expanding from
the schools out into the community. And one
has a state lucky schools using workshop type
drama as yet mostly unstructured but of
enormous importance for the children's growth of
understanding — and theatre.

Specialist resources of the performing arts

Theatre Australia

Next Month
TA's third birthday issue
Sydney's Lost Theatres
Barry Dickins on the Melbourne
Scene
Big Business & the Arts, Pt 2
Reviews: Opera, Theatre, Ballet,
Film, and lots more

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Airmail A\$35.00

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